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RISE OF THE CHRISTIAN POWER IN INDIA

B. D. BASU

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RISE OF THE
Christian Power in India

BY
MAJOR B. D. BASU, I.M.S. (*Retired*)

VOLUME III

IN 954.02,B 29 R
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R. CHATTERJEE
91, UPPER CIRCULAR ROAD
CALCUTTA

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इन्द्र विद्यावाचस्पति
चन्द्रलोक, जवाहर नगर
दिल्ली द्वारा
गुरुकुल कांगड़ी पुस्तकालय को
भेंट

PREFACE

In this volume the account of the administration of the Marquess Wellesley has been concluded. Facts connected with that administration have been interpreted from the Indian point of view. We have had to depend for those facts solely on the records written by Britishers. It would have been better had we come across contemporary records of that period written by Indians.

But in the absence of such records, we have tried to utilize the British-written records in the most impartial way possible.

The second administration of Lord Cornwallis was a very short one ; in our opinion his death was hastened by the attitude assumed by that "truculent ruffian" Lord Lake.

During Sir George Barlow's administration occurred the mutiny at Vellore. There is little doubt now that it was caused by the indecent partizanship of the then Governor of Madras towards missionaries of the Christian faith.

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ERRATA.

P. 3 line 6 from bottom, delete (VI. p. 274).
P. 43 line 9 *for* 'misdemen' *read* 'misdemean'.
P. 269 line 7 from bottom *for,* 'understood' *read* 'understand'.
P. 297 line 9 *for* 'soil' *read* 'soul.'
P. 391 line 4 *for* 'Mayor' read 'Major.'
P. 369 line 5 from bottom *for* 'whenever' *read* 'wherever.'
P. 390 line 11 *for 'successcully' read 'successfully'.*
P. 435 line 6, delete 'of.'
P. 480 add '(p. 28)' after "in India" in the last line.

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RISE OF THE
Christian Power in India

CHAPTER XXIII.

THE TREATY OF BASSEIN AND THE RETURN OF THE PEISHWA TO POONA.

The treaty of Bassein was the subject of much discussion at the hands of the English politicians in the beginning of the last century. No doubt, that treaty serves as a landmark in the history of the British occupation of India. It was the thin end of the wedge introduced into the Maratha politics which had the effect of destroying the Confederacy and thus indirectly bringing about the downfall of the Maratha power. Mr. Justice Ranade, in his *Rise of the Maratha Power*, truly observes that

> "the history of the Marathas is a history of confederated states. There was no such experiment of Federal Government on such a large scale undertaken in this country under either Hindu or Mahomedan Sovereigns."

For nearly half a century the English had been trying to dismember the Confederacy ; they flattered

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and pitted one against the other. No success had yet attended their machinations, although they had handled the different members with great dexterity and unscrupulousness. But the treaty of Bassein effected this dismemberment and the wishes of the British were accomplished, beyond their expectation.

It has been already stated that the Treaty of Subsidiary Alliance which the Nizam had concluded with the British had given great offence to the different Mahratta States. The Treaty of Bassein not only deprived the Peishwa of his independence, but was calculated to deprive the remaining Mahratta States of their freedom of action and consequently alarmed all the members of the Confederacy, excepting perhaps the Holkar. The provisions of the Treaty leave no room for doubt that such was the intention of those who framed it. Moreover, the Marquess Wellesley had never concealed his opinion, that, by one of the Maratha states contracting an alliance with the English,

"every one of the Mahratta states would become dependent upon the English Government; those who accepted the alliance, by the alliance; those who did not accept it, by being deprived of it."*

Before we discuss the different articles of this Treaty, let us advert to the proceedings of Holkar

* Mill. Hist. Vol. vi. p. 271.

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at Poona. After defeating the combined forces of Sindhia and the Peishwa, Holkar did not pursue the fugitive Peishwa Báji Rao. Had he done so, there would have remained still some hope of the British not gaining an ascendency in the Maratha Empire. But no explanation is given in any one of the printed books regarding Holkar's dilatoriness in pursuing the Peishwa. The capture of Báji Rao's person would have saved the dissolution of the Maratha Confederacy. It has been stated before that Colonel Barry Close did not accompany Báji Rao in his flight, but remained at Poona in Holkar's camp too. It is probable that Holkar was prevailed upon by him not to give an early chase to the fugitive Peishwa. The capture of the person of Báji Rao would have undone the machinations of the English and hence it seems Colonel Barry Close remained at Poona to watch the proceedings of Holkar. It should not be forgotten that the English had interested motives in preventing Báji Rao from falling into the hands of Holkar or any other member of the Mahratta Confederacy. Writes Mr. James Mill, (VI. p. 274) :

> "Colonel Barry Close had been sent (vi. p. 274) in the capacity of Resident to Poona, in the month of December of the preceding year (1801), with much reliance upon his approved ability and diligence for leading the Peishwa to a conformity with the earnest wishes of the English Government, on the subject of the defensive alliance."

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Day after day this officer had tried to rivet the chain of slavery round the neck of the Peishwa. But at first it seemed to him that there was no likelihood of the Peishwa bending his neck to the resident for fastening the chain. Almost in despair the Resident wrote to the Governor-General:—

"Every day's experience tends to strengthen the impression, that from the first, your Lordship's amicable and liberal views', in relation to this State, have not only been discordant with the natural disposition of the Peishwa; but totally adverse to that selfish and wicked policy, which, in a certain degree, he seems to have realized: a slight recurrence to the history of his machinations is sufficient to demonstrate, that, in the midst of personal peril, and the lowest debasement, he viewed the admission of permanent support from your Lordship with aversion. (*Ibid*, pp. 275).

This is how the Resident represented to the Governor-General the Peishwa's love of independence!

But slowly and silently, the poison which the Resident was steadily instilling into the mind of the Peishwa, produced its desired effect. The Peishwa, as said in the previous chapter, was willing to subsidize troops officered by the English, under certain restrictions. The Governor-General was not reluctant to consent to the Peishwa's proposals.

But when Holkar came to the vicinity of Poonah,

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Baji Rao even waived his objection to locate European troops within his own Dominions. Mr. Mill writes:—

"On the 11th of October, (1802), he transmitted through his principal minister a set of proposals to the British Resident. In these it was proposed to agree, that the troops should be permanently stationed within his dominions and that a district should be assigned for their maintenance in his territories bordering on the Toombudra......

"On the day of the action (Oct. 25, 1802), the Peishwa, surrounded by a body of troops, waited for the result, and then fled; leaving in the hands of his minister, for the British Resident, a preliminary engagement to subsidize six battalions, with their proportion of artillery, and to cede a country, either in Guzerat or the Carnatic, yielding twenty-five lacs of rupees.

"The wishes of the Governor-General were accomplished, beyond his expectation. And he ratified the engagement on the day on which it was received." (*Ibid*, pp. 277-278).

After having ensnared the Peishwa, does it stand to reason, that the Resident should not have taken steps to prevent his falling into the hands of Holkar?

When Holkar could not capture Baji Rao, he placed on the Peishwa's *musnad* a creature of his own in the person of Amrut Rao, who was the adopted son of Raghoba. At one time, Raghoba had given up all hopes of his wife ever giving birth to a son and heir to him, and hence he had adopted Amrut Rao. But unluckily for the Marathas, in his old age,

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Raghoba's wife presented him with a couple of sons of whom Baji Rao was the elder. Holkar's choice of Amrut Rao was not a bad one. The British Resident did not raise any objection to this procedure of Holkar. But now he sneaked away from Poona and joined Baji Rao.

Holkar had served as the cat's paw to the British. Their object was gained. It was necessary now to restore Baji Rao to the Peishwa's *musnad*. Mr. Mill writes :—

"Two grand objects now solicited the attention of the British Government. The first was the restoration of the Peishwa; and his elevation to that height of power, which, nominally his, actually that of the British Government, might suffice to control the rest of the Mahratta States. The next was to improve this event for imposing a similar treaty upon others of the more powerful Mahratta princes; or, at any rate, to prevent, by all possible means, their alarm from giving birth to an immediate war, which (especially in the existing State of the finances) might expose the present arrangement to both unpopularity and trouble." (*Ibid*, p. 278).

Mr. Mill was not in possession of all the despatches of the Marquess Wellesley when he wrote the above, otherwise he would have stated that the Governor-General had been making every preparation for a war with the Mahrattas, for he knew that the other Mahratta states would not allow the Peishwa to fall into the pythonic embrace of the British without a

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struggle to snatch him from their coils. Sindhia, in particular, could not look unconcernedly, on the Peishwa adopting this suicidal policy. Although

"the wishes of the Governor-General were accomplished, beyond his expectation; and he ratified the engagement on the day on which it was received;" (*Ibid*, p. 278);

yet such were his ideas of honesty and faithfulness, that he wanted to extort more concessions from the fugitive Peishwa. He was, therefore, in no hurry to get Baji Rao back to Poona. Mr. Mill writes :—

"As a delay in the advance of the troops might afford the further advantage of improving the terms of the defensive alliance with the Peishwa, by obtaining his consent to those conditions which he heretofore rejected, the Resident was informed that there was no occasion to be in a hurry, in commencing operations for the reinstatement of the Peishwa." (*Ibid*, pp. 283-284).

In the meanwhile, Holkar was the monarch of all he surveyed at Poona. He was let loose on the Peishwa's subjects and as he was not a statesman, he did not know how to turn the opportunity to good account. He could have organized a government, but instead of doing that, he was plundering the people. In this how far he was instigated by the British Resident, it is impossible to say. Captain Grant-Duff writes (p. 558) :—

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"For a short time after his victory, Holkar assumed an appearance of great moderation."

But further on he writes (p. 565) :—

"The moderation at first shown by Holkar after his victory was a mere cloak to allure Bajee Rao to return to his Capital. Being in distress for funds to pay his troops, Holkar in order to satisfy the most urgent of their demands, was obliged to levy a contribution from the city of Poona."

It should be remembered that Colonel Barry Close was in the camp of Holkar, and from the records it does not appear that he ever protested against Holkar's proceedings. He connived at, and most probably instigated, Holkar's excesses. It was in this manner, that the English were befriending their absent ally!

It was, however, found necessary to reinstate Baji Rao. All the much-coveted concessions had been extorted from him and he was now reduced to the unenviable position of a dependant. The steps which the Governor-General took for restoring the Peishwa were those which he had thought out three years previously, when under the pretence of pursuing Dhoondhia Waugh, his brother Colonel Arthur Wellesley had been secretly instructed to march on to Poona if the crisis of affairs there necessitated him to do so.

Lord Clive was still the Governor of Madras and

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he received instructions to assemble troops on the Mysore frontier. He did it with an alacrity which highly pleased the Governor-General. In a private letter to him, the Marquess Wellesley wrote from Barrackpore, 7th January, 1803:—

"The exertions which you have made for the early assembling of the army on the frontier of Mysore, were extremely seasonable and judicious."

The Governor-General anticipated hostilities with the Marathas and was getting ready for that eventuality. When four years previously, he waged war against Tippoo, he himself went to Madras to be near the scene of operations. This time, too, he was anxious to be somewhere near Poona. It appears to us that one of the reasons which prompted the Governor-General in his delay in reinstating the Peishwa was, in all likelihood, his preparation to get ready for a war with the Marathas. He quite expected it. But with that dissimulation which characterizes European diplomatists, he wrote to Lord Clive on 7th January, 1803:—

"My views are anxiously directed to the object of avoiding hostilities, and I request your Lordship to bear this principle in mind throughout every contingency which may call for your decision. I entertain a sanguine hope of accomplishing the great arrangement of establishing a British subsidiary force at Poonah, without proceeding to extremities with any party * * * The pacific conclusion,

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however, of these extraordinary commotions, may depend so essentially on the degree of despatch with which questions may be decided of a nature exclusively and necessarily reserved for the personal decision of the Governor-General that I am desirous of proceeding with all practical expedition to some point from which I can easily reach the principal scene of negotiation, and direct the daily course of measures according to the variation of circumstances and events." (Wellesley Desp. iv. p. 27).

There had been a change in the office of the Commander-in-chief in India. Sir Alured Clarke had been succeeded by General Lake. As this man played a very conspicuous part in the Second Maratha War, it is necessary to narrate his career previous to his arrival in India. He was in the confidence of the Prime Minister of England, Mr. Pitt. The country which owned the then Governor-General of India, Lord Wellesley, as one of her sons, had been made the scene of "free rape," bloodshed and murder by the instructions of Pitt and the gallant (?) deeds of General Lake. The latter had qualified himself for the high office of the Commander-in-chief by the manner in which he had helped Pitt in his scheme of uniting Ireland to Great Britain.

The great Irish orator and patriot, Mr. William O'Briem, wrote in the *Contemporary Review* for January, 1898:—

"It was Mr. Pitt who paved the way for it, it was Mr. Pitt who gave the signal for it, it was Mr. Pitt who

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turned all its horrors to account for the accomplishment of a Union which could never have been effected by fair means, nor even by the foul means of pecuniary corruption without it. The first object of Pitt and his Irish creatures was to make Parliamentary reform impossible, and keep the Parliament corrupt in order to subsequently kill it by driving upright men from reform to revolutionary courses; in other words, to terrorise the Parliament with a rebellion, as well as bribe it with gold."

The part played by General Lake in this nefarious scheme of Pitt, has been very ably described by Mr. W. T. Stead in his "Review of Reviews" for July, 1898. He writes:—

"General Lake, a truculent ruffian, whose character may well be discerned in the sulphurous fury of his letters, was Commander-in-Chief, with a free hand to strike terror in Ulster. He wrote on one occasion:—

'I much fear those villains (the Presbyterians of Ulster) will not give us the opportunity of treating them in the summary way we all wish. You may rest assured they won't have much mercy if we can once begin. Surely the *Northern Star* (a Protestant Belfast paper) should be stopped ......May I not be allowed to seize and burn the whole apparatus? Belfast must be punished most severely. I'll do all I can to thin the country of these rebellious scoundrels by sending them on board the tender.' He complained that complete martial law had not been proclaimed. 'I wish we had complete power to destroy their houses, or try some of them by *our law* if they did not bring in their arms.'......

"The excesses of General Lake in the North drove desperate men by thousands into the ranks of the United Irishmen."

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Such was the ruffian who was sent out to India as its Commander-in-Chief. General Lake was not a military genius, for none of his victories could be pronounced brilliant, or displays faultless military tactics. But the authorities in England were highly pleased with him, because he helped in bringing about the Union of Ireland with England. At that time, the English were straining their every nerve to extend their dominions in India and rob the Indian princes of their cherished rights and independence. So their choice naturally fell on General Lake, for no other person could have carried out more admirably their intentions than this man, because to reduce Indian princes to dependence, the same tactics were needed which proved so successful in cowing down the natives of Ireland. For all military operations General Lake was the confidential adviser of the Governor-General, as he was bound to be, because he ill-treated the latter's countrymen and countrywomen and because the Governor-General was a traitor to the country of his birth. In his 'most secret and confidenital' letter to General Lake, dated Barrackpore, January 7th, 1803, the Marquess Wellesley wrote:—

"I have been desirous for sometime past to communicate to you the interesting state of affairs in the Mahratta Empire, and the course of policy which I have adopted, with a view to derive every attainable advantage from this singular crisis.

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"The power, whose views might be most apprehended, and whom it is most important to hold in check, is certainly Scindhia. No serious or alarming opposition is to be feared from any other quarter, and I am inclined to believe that even Scindhia will act a neutral, at least, if not an amicable part. * * * * our most effectual mode of controlling Scindhia must be an irruption into his dominions in Hindustan, from the ceded provinces of Oude; and in that case, the main and most critical effort must be made from the quarter where you are now present.

"The result of this reasoning is, that if any serious contest should arise, (which, however, I do not expect) the most important operations will be directed against Scindhia's possessions to the destruction of his power in Hindustan; and that no probability exists of any important contest in the Deccan.

"Indeed my determination is so fixed to employ every effort for the purpose of avoiding hostilities, that I think it scarcely possible that I can be disappointed in any hope of preserving peace. *And my plan is, therefore, rather to form such arrangements as may present the most powerful and menacing aspect to every branch of the Mahratta Empire, on every point on their frontier, than to prepare any separate army with a view to one distinct operation.*" (Despatches, iv. pp. 28-29).

The italicised sentences in the above clearly prove that the Governor-General intended to provoke the Mahrattas to war. He could not have believed the Mahrattas to be such fools or children as not to be alarmed at the military preparation he was making on such a large scale 'on every point of their frontier'

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or to rouse their suspicion that the English aimed at them. Four years previously, when the Subsidary Alliance was forced on the Nizam, there had not been any warlike preparation on such a large scale as was now considered necessary to restore Báji Rao to power. Moreover, it should not be forgotten that the Marquess Wellesley expressed his opinion that Baji Rao was quite popular with his subjects and that they would hail with satisfaction his restoration to power. In a 'secret official' letter to Lord Clive, dated Fort William, February 2, 1803, the Marquess Wellesley wrote :—

"The stipulations of treaty on which I found my intention to facilitate the restoration of the Peishwa's authority, originated in a supposition that the majority of the Mahratta Jageerdars, and that the body of the Peishwa's subjects entertained a desire of co-operating in that measure. Justice and wisdom would forbid any attempt to impose upon the Mahrattas a ruler, whose restoration to authority was adverse to the wishes of every class of his subjects. The spirit of our recent engagements with the Peishwa, involved no obligation of such an extent. *Whatever might be the success of our arms, the ultimate object of those engagements could not be attained by a course of policy so violent and extreme.* If, therefore, it should appear that a decided opposition to the restoration of the Peishwa is to be expected from the majority of the Mahratta Jageerdars, and from the body of the Peishwa's subjects, I should instantly relinquish every attempt to

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restore the Peishwa to the *musnad* of Poonah." (Despatches, iv. p. 42).

If the Governor-General's supposition was a fact, namely, that the Mahratta Jagirdars and the Peishwa's subjects desired the restoration of Baji Rao, where was the necessity, then, of the warlike preparations on such a large scale? But was it true, that the Jageerdars and the Peishwa's subjects generally were desirous of the restoration of Bajee Rao? The Governor-General knew perfectly well, that that was not true. The Jageerdars of the Southern Maratha country had raised the standard of rebellion against, and thrown away their allegiance to Baji Rao. A force had been sent to subdue them. This had happened in the life-time of Nana Fadnavis. After the death of that great Maratha statesman, there was no change for the better in the feelings of those Jageerdars towards the Peishwa. If anything, they were now playing into the hands of the English.

That such was the real fact will be evident by narrating the history of the Putwardhan family. After the death of Nana Fadnavis, the Peishwa Baji Rao was so jealous of the Putwardhan family that he meditated their ruin. Captain Grant Duff writes:—

"One of the ruling passions of the Peishwa was implacable revenge; and he having connived at the destruction of the Shenwee Brahmins, Sindhia, in return, agreed to assist him in the ruin of the friends and adherents of

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Nana, and the family of the late Pureshram Bhow Putwurdhun. * * * * In regard to the latter object, of crushing the Putwurdhun family, Sindhia the more readily acquiesced in it, as he had long wished to possess himself of their extensive and fertile jagheer. It was this plot which prevented the capture of Kolapoor; as Appa Sahib, having received timely intelligence of their plan, quitted the siege." (P. 550).

The fact of the ill-treatment of the Putwardhan family was so notorious that the Governor-General's brother, Col. Arthur Wellesley, tried to take advantage of this in reducing the independence of the Peishwa. On the 20th August, 1800, he wrote to Major (afterwards Sir Thomas) Munro :—

"Sindhia's influence at Poonah is too great for us; and I see plainly, that, if Colonel Palmer remains there, we shall not be able to curb him without going to war. *There was never such an opportunity for it as the present moment; and probably by bringing forward, and by establishing in their ancient possession, the Bhow's family under our protection, we should counterbalance Sindhia, and secure our own tranquility for a great length of time.*"

There was not much love lost between the Peishwa and the Putwardhan family. The Putwardhan family did not desire the restoration of the Peishwa Baji Rao. But that family were now under the protection of the English. So the wish of the latter came with the force of an order to them. This will be evident from the letter of Major-General the

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Hon. A. Wellesley to Lieut. General Stuart. Dating his letter from Seringapatam, 4th December, 1802, Arthur Wellesley wrote:—

"The Putwurdan family (Pursharam Bhow's) are exactly in the state in which you could wish them to be, *viz.*, in anxious expectation of future events, and intending to adopt a line of conduct suitable thereto; or, in other words, to take part with the strongest."

This does not mean that the members of the Putwardhan family were particularly anxious for the restoration of Baji Rao to the Peishwa's *Musnad* at Poona. Yet Arthur Wellesley's statement that the Putwardhan family would "take part with the strongest" was construed by the Governor-General and other Englishmen as meaning that they would be glad to see the restoration of Bajee Rao.

Arthur Wellesley's letter, from which an extract has been given above, does not bear that interpretation. Yet Lieut. General Stuart, to whom the Governor-General's brother wrote the letter, considered himself justified in informing Lord Clive, the Governor of Madras, on 23rd February, 1803, that

"Major-General Wellesley has reported to me, that the Sirdar, whom he employs in the Mahratta districts, has sent, in a recent communication, a very favorable account of the dispositions of the chiefs of the Putwurdhun family, every one of whom has declared his intention of adhering to the cause of the Peishwah." (Wellington Despatches, I. 104).

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It seems probable that the Putwardhans and the Southern Jageerdars were coerced into expressing their favourable sentiments towards the restoration of the Peishwa Baji Rao. In another part of the letter from which an extract has been given above, Lieut-General Stuart wrote to Lord Clive:—

"The actual advance of a part of the subsidiary force, the recent movements of Holkar's troops towards the southward, and the danger threatened by the disposition of the army of that chieftain to the tranquility of his Highness the Nizam's dominions, * * * lead me to expect that your Lordship will judge it expedient to order the early advance of a considerable proportion of this army, for the purpose of supporting the subsidiary force, and *of encouraging the Mahratta jaghirdars to co-operate in restoring the Peishwa's authority.*"

The italicised words in the above extract, if they have any significance in diplomatic language, mean that the Jagheerdars should be coerced into accepting the Peishwa Baji Rao's authority.

So it was not true when the Governor-General wrote that

"The restoration of the Peishwa's authority originated in a supposition that the majority of the Mahratta jaghirdars, * * * entertain a desire of co-operating in that measure."

Let us now see how far the statement of the Governor-General, that "the body of the Peishwa's

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subjects" entertained a desire for his restoration, is borne out by facts.

It was in the beginning of the year 1802 that Colonel Barry Close wrote:—

"With regard to the Peishwa's government, it seems, if possible, to become less respectable every day. *The great families of the state, with whom he is at variance, prevail over him at every contest.*" Mill, vi. p. 276.

The italicised words do not show that the Peishwa's subjects were anxious for his restoration.

Colonel Barry Close further wrote:—

"If the Peishwa should ever conclude subsidiary engagements on these terms, he would never apply for the aid of the stipulated force, except in cases of the utmost emergency; and his expectation probably is, that the knowledge of his ability to command so powerful a body of troops would alone be sufficient to give due weight to his authority, and to preclude any attempt which might otherwise be made for the subversion of it." (*Ibid,* p. 276).

Does it prove the popularity of Baji Rao?

Besides, the Governor-General himself was fully acquainted with the character of Baji Rao and he knew perfectly well that he was not the proper man to rule the Marathas. Mr. Mill writes:—

"In 1798, when the Nizam consented to transfer the military powers of government within his dominions to the English a similar proposal of 'general defensive alliance, and mutual guarantee,' as it is called by Lord Wellesley, was strongly pressed upon the Peishwa. The moment was

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conceived to be favorable. *'The authority of Bajee Rao,'* says the Governor-General, *'was then reduced to a state of extreme weakness by the imbecility of his councils, by the instability and treachery of his disposition, and by the prevalence of internal discord.'* " (*Ibid*, p. 261).

The words in italics clearly show the estimate which the Marquess Wellesley had formed of Baji Rao. It was, therefore, hypocrisy pure and simple and want of veracity on the part of the Governor-General to declare that

"Justice and wisdom would forbid any attempt to impose upon the Mahrattas a ruler, whose restoration to authority was adverse to every class of his subjects." (*Ibid*. p. 285).

Regarding the restoration of the Peishwa to authority, Mr. James Mill has very ably exposed the hypociisy of the Governor-General. He writes:—

"This virtuous example, till such a time as the majority of the people in every civilized country have become sufficiently enlightened to see the depravity of the case in its own essence, will help to stamp with infamy the most flagitious perhaps of all the crimes which can be committed against human nature, the imposing upon a nation, by force of foreign armies, and for the pleasure or interest of foreign rulers, a government, composed of men, and involving principles, which the people for whom it is destined have either rejected from experience of their *badness*, or repel from their experience or expectation of better. Even where the disparity of civilization and knowledge were very great and where it was beyond dispute, that a civilized country was

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about to bestow upon a barbarous one the greatest of all possible benefits, a good and beneficent government; even here, it would require the strongest circumstances to justify the employment of violence or force. But, where nations, upon a level only with another in point of civilization, or perhaps below it, proceed with bayonets to force upon it a government confessedly bad, and prodigiously below the knowledge and civilization of the age, under the pretence of fears that such a nation will choose a worse government for itself, these nations, or their rulers, if the people have no voice in the matter, are guided by views of benefit to themselves, and despise the shame of trampling upon the first principles of humanity and justice.

"In paying the homage which he counted due to the will of a nation of Mahrattas, the Marquis Wellesley was not making a sacrifice of interests which he held in low esteem. In his address to the home authorities, dated the 24th of December, 1802, he declared his conviction, that 'those defensive engagements which he was desirous of concluding with the Mahratta states, were essential to the complete consolidation of the British Empire in India, and to the future tranquility of Hindustan.' Yet the complete consolidation of the British Empire in India, and the future tranquility of Hindustan, which could never exist till a sufficient bridle was put in the mouth of the Mahratta power, he thought it his duty to sacrifice, or to leave to the care of unforeseen events, rather than violate the freedom of will, in this important concern, of the people of one of the Mahratta states." (*Ibid*, pp. 286-287).

The truth is, it has been the policy of the English, ever since the days of Clive, to place the wrong man on the throne of a state and thus to try

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the patience of the subjects and provoke them to rebellion. It is nonsense, if not cant and hypocrisy, to talk of the measure as conducing to the welfare of the nation over whom the English place their own creature to rule. What led to the first Afghan War? What is the explanation of the frequent expeditions to the North-Western frontier of India? It is the same old story of the British trying to subject a nation or a tribe to the sweet will of an incompetent and inefficient ruler.

The Governor-General intentionally delayed the restoration of Baji Rao. His principal reason for this delay, according to his own admission, was to extort more concessions from the Peishwa. But, as said before, it is probable that the Governor-General was making preparations for the war which he knew would be the inevitable consequence of restoring Baji Rao to the Peishwa's *Musnad* under the protection of the British.

In the meanwhile, Baji Rao was getting impatient of his self-imposed exile. He was anxiously looking forward to the help promised to him by his Christian friends. For his own part, he had agreed to everything which they had dictated to him. But they were very slow in fulfilling their promise. He was not content with the negotiations with the Bombay Government. To expedite matters, he opened negotiations also with the Governor-General's

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brother, Arthur Wellesley, who was Governor of Mysore territory. He entrusted Bapoo Ganeish Gokleh with these negotiations, who sent a Vakeel to Seringapatam to know the terms on which Arthur Wellesley would treat with the Peishwa. Gokleh had interested motives in the restoration of Bajee Rao. This will be evident from Arthur Wellesley's letters. Dating his letter from Seringapatam, 2nd December, 1802, Major-General the Hon. A. Wellesley wrote to Lieutenant-General Stuart, Commander-in-Chief of the Army of Fort St. George:—

"A vakeel from Goklah, the commanding officer of the Peishwa's troops on the frontier, arrived here yesterday, and, according to the tenor of the orders I formerly received from the Right Honourable the Governor in Council upon this subject, I had a communication with him this morning."

On the 4th December, 1802, he communicated to Lt.-General Stuart, the purport of the conversation he had with Goklah's Vakeel. He wrote:—

"Bapoojee Goneish Goklah was the person who arrested the person of Holkar (Vithojee), afterwards put to death by order of the Peishwa; in consequence thereof he has nothing to expect from Jeswant Rao Holkar, . . .

"I took an opportunity this morning of entering into a general conversation regarding the views and objects, and probable line of conduct, of all the Mahratta chiefs in this part of India, in the present crisis of Mahratta affairs. It is obvious that Goklah must be very decided in his conduct; he has no favour to expect from Holkar, and this is pro-

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bably the reason for which he, so immediately after his success, despatched this vakeel to me. The vakeel says that the Putwardhun family (Pursheram Bhow's) are exactly in the state in which you could wish them to be, *viz.*, in anxious expectation of future events, and intending to adopt a line of conduct suitable thereto; or, in other words, to take part with the strongest."

So, after all, the truth regarding the expressed desire of the Maratha Jagheerdars for the restoration of Baji Rao is out. This so-called desire of the Jagheerdars for the restoration of the Peishwa was a fabrication of Arthur Wellesley. It was a conspiracy formed by the Governor-General's brother with Gokle to coerce the Jagheerdars and thus to facilitate the march of British troops to Poona.

There were troops assembled on the Mysore frontier, on the Nizam's frontier. Dating his letter to Lord Clive from Fort William, 2nd February, 1803, the Governor-General wrote that

"the objects of assembling British troops on the frontier of Mysore were, the effectual defence of our possessions during the convulsed state of the Mahratta Empire; and the eventual establishment of a subsidiary force at Poonah, under the operation of the General defensive alliance concluded with the Peishwa."

On the 3rd February, 1803, the Marquess Wellesley's Secretary, named Mr. N. B. Edmonstone, wrote to Colonel Close, that

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"in pursuance of the plan of operations which his Excellency resolved to adopt, orders will be immediately issued to the resident at Hyderabad, authorising him to direct the advance of the whole of the subsidiary force for the purpose of forming a junction with the army of his Highness the Nizam and of occupying, in conjunction with that army, a position on the frontier of his Highness' territory, most favourable for the march of that force to Poonah."

When all these preparations for war were complete, then the Peishwah was ordered (that is the proper expression to use) to return to Poonah. For this purpose, he had been furnished with an escort of 2,300 infantry, of whom 1200 were British. He returned to Poona and resumed his seat on the *musnud* on the 13th May, 1803.

For his return to Poona, as said before, it was necessary to march the forces that had assembled on the frontiers of Mysore and the Nizam's dominions towards Poonah. Major-General the Hon. A. Wellesley was placed in command of the former and Colonel Stevenson of the latter. The reasons for appointing Arthur Wellesley to the command are set forth by Lord Clive in his letter, dated Fort St. George, the 27th February, 1803, to Lieutenant-General Stuart:—

"The practical experience obtained by Major General the Hon. A. Wellesley, on the immediate theatre of the intended operations, combined with the personal inter-

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course established between that officer and the Mahratta Chiefs on the frontier, and supported by the great ability uniformly manifested by that officer in various situations of difficulty, renders me solicitous that he should be selected for the command of the advancing detachment."

It will be remembered that when the British troops were permitted to pursue Dhoondhia Waugh in the Mahratta territories, Arthur Wellesley was in command of those troops. The experience which he gained there and on which he based his "Memorandum upon operations in the Mahratta territory," befitted him for the responsible position of the commandant. Moreover, he was a past master in the arts of intrigue and conspiracy. It was these qualifications of Arthur Wellesley to which Lord Clive very probably referred, when he wrote about "the personal intercourse established between that officer (A. Wellesley) and the Mahratta Chiefs on the frontier."

The force under Major-General Wellesley amounted to nearly eleven thousand and that under Colonel Stevenson to nearly seven thousand. On the 3rd March, 1803, Lt.-General Stuart wrote to Lord Clive :—

"I have directed the divisions of the army to assemble at Hurryhur on the 6th instant, and I expect that the detachment under Major General the Honourable Arthur Wellesley will be able to commence its march into the Maratha territory on the 8th."

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On the 9th March, 1803, Lt.-General Stuart wrote to Arthur Wellesley:—

"You have already been apprised of your appointment to the command of a detachment destined to advance into the Mahratha territory. . . .

"Although I have considered it to be expedient to avoid prescribing the particular plan of the operations of your detachment, yet I judge it necessary to state certain principal objects which, in my judgment, ought to regulate the course of your proceedings.

1. "To encourage the southern jaghirdars to declare in favor of the Peishwah's cause; to employ every means to reconcile their mutual animosities, and to induce them to unite their forces with the advancing detachment, for the purpose of re-establishing his Highness's Government. [Why was there any need 'to encourage the Southern 'jaghirdars to declare in favor of the Peishwa's cause,' when the Governor-General had already expressed his opinion that the jaghirdars 'entertained a desire of co-operating in that measure'? In the language of British diplomacy, 'to encourage' means 'to coerce.']

2. "To proceed to Meritch, and form a junction with the Peishwa; or, should that measure be deemed inadvisable on the part of his Highness, with such of his chieftains and troops as may be able to meet you there.

3. "To open a communication, and form a junction with the subsidiary force under Colonel Stevenson, and the contingent of his Highness the Nizam.

4. "To proceed eventually to Poonah, and establish an order of things in that capital, favorable to the return of the Peshwah, and the attainment of the ends of the late treaty."

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The big force under the command of Major-General the Hon'ble Arthur Wellesley was principally intended to coerce the jaghirdars. This is not only evident from what has been said above, but Lieut.-General Stuart, on the 9th March, 1803, distinctly instructed Arthur Wellesley to coerce the jaghirdars. He wrote:—

"I have not noticed in the foregoing orders the conduct to be observed on your part, in case of opposition of any chieftain; and in particular of Jeswant Rao Holkar, from whom we are led to expect most opposition to your proceedings.

"The instructions of the Governor-General and Lord Clive contain no orders, and afford no positive rule to guide my determination on this important head. I infer, however, from the spirit of those instructions, that if the majority of the southern jaghirdars, and the sentiments of the body of the people, are found to declare in favor of the restoration of Bajee Rao, the British detachment ought to persevere in the endeavours to re-establish his authority; and should the detachment, during the prosecution of that endeavor, encounter the hostility of any individual jaghirdar, that they are to employ, in concert with the well-affected jaghiredars, every practicable means to overcome his opposition. In the event, therefore, of any single feudatory opposing resistance to the restoration of the Peishwah, after you have ascertained that the sentiments of the majority of the chieftains are favorable to that measure, I am of opinion that the instructions which I have received justify one in authorising you to compel his submission" (Wellington Desptches, I. p. 114).

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But Lieut.-General Stuart did not say what Major-General A. Wellesley should have done, had 'the majority of the chieftains' been unfavourable to the restoration of the Peishwah. He left that contingency out of consideration altogether. Reading between the lines there can be no doubt that his instructions to Major-General Wellesley amounted to coercing the jaghiredars to submission.

His expectation of opposition from Jeswunt Rao Holkar was not well-founded. The Governor-General, at least, did not expect any opposition from him. Dating his 'most secret and confidential' letter to General Lake, from Barrackpore, January 7th, 1803, the Marquess Wellesley wrote:—

> "The power, whose views might be most apprehended, and whom it is most important to hold in check, is certainly Scindhia. No serious or alarming opposition is to be feared from any other quarter."

This was quite true. Holkar never offered any resistance to the prosecution of the ambitious designs of the English. On the contrary, he was used as a cat's paw by them and so it would have been absurd to expect any opposition from him.

It is impossible to know the exact nature of the instructions which Lieut.-General Stuart received from the Governor-General. But from the latter's letter to him, we can easily guess that the Marquess Wellesley gave him instructions which were so

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Machiavellian in character that he did not consider it wise to put them on paper. Dating his letter, marked "Private and Confidential," from Fort William, February 8th, 1803, the Marquess Wellesley wrote to His Excellency Lieut.-General Stuart as follows:—

"The favourable appearance of affairs at Poonah, combined with the pressure of various circumstances in our situation at this Presidency, has induced me to relinquish my intention of proceeding to Fort St. George in the present season. I have sent Major Malcolm to Madras with an appointment to Mysore, and as he is fully acquainted with every sentiment of my mind respecting the actual crisis of affairs in the Mahratta Empire, I have referred Lord Clive to him on every point which may appear doubtful or deficient in my instructions. You will also find Major Malcolm completely apprized of the views which I entertain with regard to the operations of the army, and I request that you will accordingly admit him to your confidence, and *receive through him such communications from me, as it is not practicable to commit to paper.*"

From the words put in italics, it is not difficult to guess the nature of his instructions.

Colonel Stevenson was placed under the orders of Major-General Wellesley. Lt.-General Stuart wrote to the latter:—

"The instructions to Colonel Stevenson, which I have ordered to be furnished to you, will explain the measures prescribed to that officer. I have instructed him to communicate regular information of his proceedings and situation to you, and to obey to your orders."

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Major-General Wellesley, when fully equipped with the instructions above referred to, commenced his march from Hurryhur on the 9th of March and crossed the Toombuddra river on the 12th. It was an uneventful march so far as there was no resistance against him from any one of the jagheerdars or other Maratha chieftains. In the official records, this "amicable conduct of the jagheerdars and the inhabitants" is attributed to "the fame which the British arms had acquired in the campaign under Major-General Wellesley's command against Dhoondhia Waugh." (Wellington Despatches I. 118). But it was more probably due to the large army he had under his command by means of which he experienced no difficulty to coerce and overawe all the chiefs and jaghiredars.

When Major-General Wellesley was not far from Poona, Colonel Barry Close, the resident with the Peishwa, spread the rumour that Amrut Rao had it in contemplation to burn the city of Poona. Amrut Rao was Holkar's creature, but dissensions had arisen between them which led Holkar to desert him. It is very probable that the English had a hand in producing dissensions between the two. For, we find Lord Wellesley writing to the Secret Committee of the Court of Directors on the 14th February, 1803, as follows :—

"Dissensions have arisen between Amrut Row and

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Jeswunt Row Holkar, which may be expected to produce a separation of interests between those chieftains. * * * * That chieftain (Holkar) has repeated his propositions in a modified form to the Resident, for an accommodation with the Peishwa, and has solicited the mediation of the Resident, and of the Peishwa, for the satisfaction of his demands upon Dowlut Rao Scindhia. As a proof of his sincerity, Jeswunt Rao Holkar has signified his intention of sending the females of the Peishwa's family to his Highness at Bassein; Jeswunt Rao Holkar has been equally earnest in soliciting the mediation of his Highness the Nizam."

It is probable that the pro-British proclivities of Holkar disgusted Amrut Rao and brought about the dissensions between them. But the report about the burning of Poona was an utterly absurd one.* Mr. Mill (VI. 293) writes :—

"Amrut Rao was left at Poonah, with a guard of about

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* This mode of destroying property by fire is peculiarly Europeanish. The Hindoos were never such barbarians as to resort to this method of vandalism. The Hindu mode of warfare was averse to wantonly destroy the enemy's goods and chattel. In this respect, the Hindoos were far superior to the civilized (?) Christian nations of the West. Their chivalrous and generous behaviour towards their enemies have been borne testimony to, by all the writers of antiquity. Thus Megasthenes states that husbandmen were exempted from fighting and 'devote their whole time to tillage; nor would an enemy coming upon a husbandman at work on his land do him any harm. 'Among the

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1500 men, alone, and helpless, when Holkar marched. It was, nevertheless, reported, that this defenceless individual, who from first to last is represented, by the English themselves, as utterly averse to the part which he was constrained by Holkar to act, had it in contemplation to burn the city of Poonah; that is, to render his place impracticable with the people into whose hands he saw that he must inevitably fall. Intimation of this report, and, it would seem, of some belief in the danger which it announced, was transmitted (repeatedly we are told) by Colonel Close to General Wellesley."

The object in spreading the rumour appears to be to hurry on General Wellesley's advance to Poona. This is evident from his letter to the Governor-General. Dating his letter from Poona, 21st April, 1803, he wrote:—

"I arrived here yesterday with the Cavalry of my division.

Indians. . . by whom husbandmen are regarded as a class that is sacred and inviolable, the tillers of the soil, even when battle is raging in their neighbourhood, are undisturbed by any sense of danger.' He adds also that the land is not ravaged with fire nor the trees cut down.

Compare and contrast this with the method in vogue among Europeans in burning the villages and crops of their enemies. Amrut Rao was a high caste Hindoo and with all his faults he had not so far degraded himself as to adopt the European method and burn the city of his ancestors. This report as to Amrut Row's intended burning of Poona is a pure and simple falsehood invented by the British.

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"I had received repeated intimations from Colonel Close, that Amrut Rao, who still remained at Poonah, intended to burn that city, * * * * * I therefore determined to march forward with the British Cavalry and the Mahrattas, as soon as I should arrive within a long forced march from Poonah. In the meantime I received intelligence that Amrut Rao was still in the neighbourhood on the 18th; and that he had removed the Peishwa's family to Sevaghur, a measure which was generally supposed to be preparatory to burning the town; and I marched on the 19th, at night, above forty miles to this place, making the total distance which the Cavalry have marched, since the 19th in the morning, about sixty miles.

"Amrut Rao heard of our march yesterday morning, and marched off with some precipitation, leaving the town in safety. It is generally believed here, that he intended to burn it, and that it was saved only by our arrival. The infantry will come here to-morrow."

None but a fool could have believed in the report that Amrut Rao intended to burn the city. Why did he not do so, when he had every opportunity of burning it? Even at the last moment, when he "marched off with some precipitation," he had time enough to set fire to the city of Poona. The report is so absurd, that it is useless to say more about it.

All the objects which General Wellesley had been instructed by Lieutenant-General Stuart to carry out, were now gained. One of his instructions ran :—

"To proceed eventually to Poonah, and establish an

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order of things in that Capital, favorable to the return of the Peishwah, and the attainment of the ends of the late treaty."

On his arrival at Poona, he set himself to this task. He wrote to the Governor-General on the 21st April, 1803 :—

"Matters in general have a good appearance. I think they will end as you wish. The combined chiefs, of whom we have heard so much, have allowed us to come quietly, and take our station at this place; and notwithstanding their threats, have taken no one step to impede our march, or to divert our attention to other objects. Here we are now in force, in a position from which nothing can drive us, and in which we shall gain strength daily. On the other hand, they have not yet made peace among themselves; much less have they agreed to attack, or in any particular plan of attack."

Then General A. Wellesley sounded the note of the coming Mahratta war. He wrote :—

"If I should be mistaken, and that in opposition to the conclusions of reasoning upon the state of our affairs with each of the Mahratta chiefs, who, we are told, were to combine to attack us; and, upon a comparision of our means of annoying each and all of them, with theirs of annoying the Nizam (which is all that they can do), we should still have a war with them, you will have the satisfaction of reflecting, that in consequence of the course of measures which you have already pursued, you have removed the seat of war to a distance from the Company's territories; and that you have the means of carrying it on

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in such a state of preparation, as to insure its speedy and successful termination."

"In thus reasoning upon the subject, I conclude that we should have had to contend with this confederacy at all events, or at least that we should have had a war with the Mahratta powers, in some shape, even if this treaty with the Peishwah had not been concluded."

So there can be no doubt, that all the preparations to restore Baji Rao to the Peishwa's *musnud* were meant for the war which the Governor-General had in contemplation with the Mahratta powers. This matter will be again referred to, when we come to discuss the causes which led to the second Mahratta war.

Major-General A. Wellesley established 'an order of things' in Poona which was 'favorable to the return of the Peishwah.' In the official records it is stated that

"arrangements were made by the Governor of Bombay, and by Lieut. Colonel Close, for the march of the Peishwah towards Poonah. A detachment, consisting of his Majesty's 78th regiment, (which left Bengal on the 7th of February, and arrived at Bombay on the 5th of April, 1803,) five companies of his Majesty's 84th regiment, a proportion of artillery, and 1035 Sepoys, in all 2205 men, was formed, and placed under the command of Colonel Murray, of his Majesty's 84th regiment, as an escort to his Highness, who left Bassein, attended by Colonel Close, on the 27th of April.

'On the 7th of May the Peishwah passed General Wel-

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lesley's camp at Panowullah, near Poonah. On the 13th his Highness attended by his brother Chimnajee Appah and by a numerous train of the principal chiefs of the Mahratta Empire, proceeded towards the city of Poonah, and having entered his palace, resumed his seat upon the musnad, and received presents from his principal servants." (Wellington Despatches, I. 158).

Thus was the restoration of Baji Rao accomplished. This restoration compares most unfavorably with that of Charles II of England. Baji Rao did not receive that ovation from his subjects which the exiled monarch of England had. In describing the restoration of the Peishwa, no historian will use the language of Macaulay regarding that of Charles II. Macaulay wrote that "if we were to choose a lot from amidst the multitude of those which men have drawn since the beginning of the world, we would choose that of Charles II on the day of his return."

Baji Rao's restoration was an ignominious and disgraceful affair. It was everything which that of Charles II was not.

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CHAPTER XXIV.

THE SECOND MARATHA WAR—ITS GENESIS AND ALLEGED CAUSES.

When the disgraceful act of the restoration of the Peishwa was played out, the principal actors on the scene did not leave the stage and let the curtain drop. One should have thought that the objects for which so much trouble had been taken by the Governor-General and his brother had been accomplished by depriving the Peishwa of his independence, placing British troops in his dominions, restoring him to the *musnud* at Poona and finally making him a subsidiary ally of the British. But the latter entertained designs too deep and cunning to be easily divined by simple Asiatics. They did not consider their task done by ensnaring the Peishwa. They did everything in their power to provoke the Marathas to war. But when the Maratha powers did not declare war upon the English, the latter attacked them.

This second Maratha war forms one of the blackest chapters in the history of British India. It was a war in which the Britishers were the aggressors and its consequences were fatal to the independence of the Indian States. What were the causes which

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brought about this war? In tracing the causes, we shall find that the Maratha Powers did not give any offence to the British to lead them to declare war upon them.

It has been said that Jeswunt Rao Holkar had attacked the troops of Sindhia as well as those of the Peishwa at Poona and had defeated them. After the restoration of the Peishwa, one would have expected that the English would have pursued and punished Holkar for the manner in which he had ill-treated their protége and ally, the Peishwa. But the British did nothing of the sort. That Maratha chieftain was not content with plundering the Peishwa's territories, but invaded the dominions of the ally of the East Indian Company—the Nizam. After leaving Poona, Holkar made his appearance in the Nizam's territories on which he levied contributions. Even this conduct of Holkar did not move the English to punish him. Dating his letter from Poona, 13th May, 1803, Major-General the Hon. A. Wellesley wrote to Major Kirkpatrick, Resident at Hyderabad:—

"I have the honor to enclose the copy of a letter which I have received from Jeshwunt Rao Holkar, in answer to one which I wrote to him upon the subject of his conduct at Aurangabad.

"It is reported here that Holkar was invited to plunder Aurangabad by the Nizam's sirdar in charge of that city. From your knowledge of the character of this sirdar and

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of his connexions, you will be able to form a judgment of the probable truth of this report."

There was no note of punishing Holkar sounded in the above. Major-General Wellesley not only gave credit to a report (which appears to be a fabrication of his brain), but to exonerate Holkar for his conduct, he wrote on the 27th May, 1803, to his brother, the Governor-General,

> "you will have seen Holkar's letter to me upon the subject of the plunder of Aurangabad. If matters are brought to a peaceable conclusion with Scindhia and Holkar goes off to Hindustan, towards which quarter he is now moving, in my opinion, it will be most proper to take no further notice of the contribution levied upon Aurangabad; *at least not to go to war to force Holkar to pay it back again.*"

From the words put in italics in the extract it will be evident that the English had no intention to punish Holkar. How is one to explain the conduct of these English for their leniency towards, nay, connivance at, the doings of Holkar while they had been so precipitate in declaring war upon Tippoo Sultan for the latter's alleged meditation of invading the country of the Rajah of Travancore, the ally of the British? Their conduct towards Holkar is to be accounted for on one hypothesis only, which has been already referred to on a previous page. It is that Holkar had been made their cat's paw and that he

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had played into their hands and served them remarkably well in creating distractions in the Maharasthra and thus helped them in ensnaring the Peishwa.

This hypothesis derives additional weight from the fact that Holkar did not join the confederates in their war with the British. The latter still affected that Holkar was their friend. For, Major-General the Hon. A. Wellesley wrote on the 16th July, 1803, to Jeswunt Rao Holkar:—

"Much time has elapsed since I have had the pleasure of hearing from you, although I am anxious to cultivate the good understanding which has subsisted between the Honorable Company's Government and you."

Good understanding indeed, when Holkar could expel the Peishwah from Poonah and levy contributions on the territories of the ally of the Honorable Company's Government, the Nizam!

After the defeat of his troops by Holkar, Dowlut Rao Sindhia tried to retrieve the disaster. But his situation was a very pitiable one. The English had created distractions in his dominions and fomented dissensions amongst his domestics and relations. Notwithstanding all these discouragements, it speaks very highly of the statesmanship of Sindhia that he thoroughly grasped his critical situation and tried to improve it. He asked the Rajah of Berar to join him and with this combination, he hoped he would

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be able to bring the Holkar to his senses and snatch the imbecile Peishwa from the pythonic embrance of the English.

With these intentions, he set out from his capital towards the Deccan. It does not appear that he ever contemplated a contest with the English. He had his grievances against them. He had not been consulted and had no hand in framing the Treaty of Bassein. The manner in which they concluded that treaty with the Peishwa, was not the one calculated to cultivate good understanding between the Honorable Company and the independent Maratha Powers. This treaty deliberately ignored and insulted Sindhia.

The opinion of Dowlut Rao Sindhia should have been taken before the English induced the imbecile Peishwa to conclude the treaty of Bassein with them. Sindhia should have been consulted, for he was the proper authority as to the necessity or otherwise of a new treaty with the Peishwa. The fact should not be lost sight of that the treaty which governed the relations between the Maratha Powers and the English was that of Salbye which had been ratified during the administration of Warren Hastings. The English would have fared very badly, and perhaps their administration in India would have been swept away altogether, had the treaty of Salbye not been concluded with the Marathas. That treaty would

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never have been an accomplished fact, but for the mediation of Madhoji Sindhia and the Regent of Berar of that day.

It was the boast of Warren Hastings that he had succeeded in bringing about a good understanding between the proud Marathas and the 'unpretending' merchants then constituting the East India Company by the conclusion of the Treaty of Salbye. When he was impeached for his high crimes and misdemenours in India, he pointedly referred in his reply to the part he had played in the Treaty of Salbye.

The successors of those who had been 'converted into a friend' and 'employed as the instrument of peace' had likewise hoped the Treaty of Salbye would guarantee 'everlasting peace' between the Marathas and the English. A sense of gratitude and honor should have dictated the latter to consult the successors of those who had contributed to the accomplishment of the Treaty of Salbye before cancelling that Treaty and replacing it by that of Bassein. But the English of those days in India lacked all fine sensibilities of gratitude, honor and honesty ; for them wrong-doing had no limits save those imposed by expediency and personal needs. They looked upon a remorseless conscience, cunning and wrong-doing as the means adapted to reach their desired end.

As said before, there is no evidence that Dowlut

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Rao Sindhia meditated declaring war upon the English. Even if he did so, he should not be blamed, for he had well-founded grievances against them. It was he who had raised Baji Rao to the Peishwa's *Musnad*, and naturally he could not sit idle when he saw the manner in which the Peishwa was being ensnared by the English. Sindhia was not consulted as to the new treaty of Bassein, and it also appears that he had not been made acquainted with the contents of that treaty before, or even a long time after, the restoration of Baji Rao to the Peishwa's *Musnad*.

Dowlut Rao Sindhia was smarting under these grievances. To make the situation worse and to provoke him to hostilities, the Governor-General had ordered troops to assemble on the frontiers of all the Mahratta States. Dating his 'most secret and confidential' letter from Barrackpore January 7th 1803, the Marquess Wellesley wrote to His Excellency Lieut.-General Lake, the Commander-in-Chief:—

> "And my plan is, therefore, rather to form such arrangements as may present the most powerful and menacing aspect to every branch of the Mahratta Empire, on every point of their frontier, than to prepare any separate army with a view to one distinct operation."

But this menacing aspect of the British troops did not lead the Mahrattas to declare hostilities. We cannot too highly admire the patience, and accom-

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plished statesmanship which Dowlut Rao Sindhia exhibited at this critical hour. But after all, he was a simple Asiatic and was unable to cope with the treachery of the perfidious and faithless representatives of the East India Company. That he had no intention to go to war with them is borne testimony to even by the Governor-General. On the 19th April, 1803, the Marquess Wellsley wrote to the Secret Committee that

"from the moment that the intentions of the British Government had been avowed, it became the interest of Scindhia to avoid every measure tending to expose him to the jealousy of a power, which commands the frontier of the most valuable portion of his dominions.

"The sincerity of Scindhia's declaration is further confirmed by his continuance at Burhaunpore in a state of inaction until the season, together with the progress of our forces, had advanced so far that no exertion on his part could have enabled him to occupy Poonah, previously to the arrival of the British troops at that Capital."

In the same letter, the Governor-General wrote about the Rajah of Berar as follows:—

"The intelligence which I have received from the Court of the Rajah of Berar, indicates that Chieftain's dissatisfaction at the conclusion of defensive engagements between the British Government and his Highness the Peishwa.

"Whatever may be the aversion of the Rajah of Berar to the interposition of the British Government in the affairs of the Mahratta Empire, any attempt on the part of that chieftain to obstruct the execution of the treaty of Bassein,

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would be inconsistent with the systematic caution of his character and imprudent in the actual state of his military power, and in the exposed situation of his territories. His just rights cannot be endangered, and may receive additional security by the restoration of a regular authority at Poonah, under the protection of the Company."

Of course, no one ever dreamt of the Holkar taking up arms against the English.

So by the showing of the Governor-General himself, none of the Maratha Powers had in contemplation hostilities against the English. The Governor-General's brother, Major-General the Hon'ble Arthur Wellesley, was also of the same opinion. On the 3rd May, 1803, he wrote to Lieut.-General Stuart:—

"It is my opinion that it is by no means certain that Scindhia will advance to Poona, and it is most probable that the report of his intended march has been circulated for the purpose of intimidating us, or the Nizam."

He wrote on the same date to Major Kirkpatrick, Resident at Hyderabad:—

"I repeat that I do not believe that Doulut Rao Scindhia will venture to cross the Godavery, and expose himself to a conflict with the troops in this quarter, and to the certain consequences to himself of hostilities with the British Government. I have to observe, however, that if hostilities with Scindhia and Holkar should be the consequence of the present crisis of our affairs, the British Government were never so well situated to carry them on with success, and bring them to a speedy termination." (which

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in other words, meant that a war should be forced on Scindhia).

Thus from the testimonies of two such high authorities as the Governor-General and his brother, it is evident that there was no probability of Sindhia's entertaining hostile designs against the British. But what was the explanation, then, of Sindhia's having crossed the Nerbudda and marching towards the Deccan? There are two explanations of Sindhia's movements and these have been furnished by the British themselves. One was that Sindhia tried to unite the Maratha Powers in a confederacy as a defensive measure against the menacing attitude assumed by the British on the frontier of every Maratha State. The Marquess Wellesley wrote to the Secret Committee of the Directors of the East India Company on the 19th April, 1803:—

"Nor is the sincerity of Scindhia's declaration incompatible with the project of a confederacy between Scindhia, Holkar, and the Rajah of Berar for purposes of a defensive nature, which I consider to be the extreme object of Scindhia, in negotiating such a confederacy, without any views whatever of hostility towards the British power."

Dating his letter from Poona, 15th May, 1803, Lieut.-Colonel Close, Resident at Poona, wrote to the Secret Committee of the Honorable Court of Directors:—

"Although Scindhia gave Colonel Collins the most

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positive assurances, that he was determined not to interfere in the arrangements lately concluded between the Honorable Company and the Peishwa, his conduct has since been unsteady and equivocal. On the 4th instant he marched from Burhaunpur with the declared intention of proceeding to Poona by way of Badowly, a town about fifty coss to the westward of Burhaunpur, and the place where, it is said, the concerted meeting of the three chieftains is to take place. . . . .

"Whether the proposed meeting at Badowly will ever take place, or if it do happen, what may be the result, it must still be difficult to determine. The restoration of the Peishwa; the powerful support afforded to his Government by the British forces, joined by so many of the jaghirdars and sirdars subordinate to the Poona state; added to the cement which the alliance must daily acquire, are circumstances which may influence strongly the deliberations of the apprehended confederacy, and press upon the members of it the expediency, if they do form a league, of making it only defensive. In every event, the approaching season is unfavourable for active operations. The rivers that rise from the western ghauts will soon fill; crossing them, to the native armies, will be dangerous, if not impracticable, but safe and easy to the British forces.

"Should the apprehended confederacy, therefore, attempt to invade the Nizam's or the Poonah territories during the approaching monsoon, their operations must be liable to great disadvantages.

"*That Scindhia should join the confederacy for hostile purposes is certainly impossible.* He is supposed to be secretly averse to an accommodation with Holkar; and to engage in a Southern invasion in the full prospect of meeting with the most formidable opposition, and leave

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his northern possessions exposed to an attack at so great a distance from his court, would appear to be a state of things which such a mind as Scindhia's would carefully avoid."

This is one explanation of Sindhia's marching towards the Deccan. It was his intention to form a confederacy for defensive purposes. In this, the Britishers did not see any harm ; at least, they do not express any disapprobation of Sindhia's conduct.

The other explanation of Sindhia's movement towards the Deccan is to be found in the fact that the Peishwa desired him to come to Poona. For this purpose, the Peishwa had deputed an agent to the Court of Sindhia. The Governor-General had previously expressed his opinion, that if the Peishwa desired to withdraw from the engagements of the Treaty of Bassein, he would not compel him to adhere to the faith of those engagements. On the 10th February, 1803, the Marquess Wellesley wrote to the Honourable the Secret Committee of the Court of Directors :—

"The knowledge of our arrangements with the Peishwa may induce Doulut Row Scindhia and Holkar, to compromise their differences and to offer to the Peishwa proposals for restoring His Highness to the Musnad of Poona, which His Highness may be disposed to accept, notwithstanding the actual conclusion of engagements for that purpose with the British Government. In such an event it is not my intention to attempt to compel the Peishwa to adhere to

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the faith of his engagements, at the hazard of involving the Company in a war with the combined Mahratta States."

The Peishwa had never been given any opportunity to dissociate himself from the Britishers. On his restoration, he found the yoke which they had placed on his neck very galling. He had changed King Log for King Stork and had jumped out of the frying pan into the fire. In a weak moment, he had courted their alliance and was now repenting for having done so. It was natural for him, therefore, to try to withdraw from the engagements contracted with them. For this purpose, he wanted the advice of his former friend, Dowlut Rao Sindhia, and so he desired him to come to Poona. It was well known to the Britishers that Sindhia had been invited to Poona by the Peishwa. They tried to prevent Sindhia from coming to Poona and having an interview with the Peishwa. Major-General Wellesley wrote on 10th May, 1803, to Lieut.-General Stuart:—

"Colonel Collins intends to press the Peishwa to desire Scindhia not to advance to Poona; and I think that I ought to write him a letter to say that such is the Peishwa's wish, and that it is proper it should be complied with."

General Wellesley knew that that was a lie, that it was his wish and not that of the Peishwa, for the latter had not yet returned to Poona. That this was

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not true is proved by the General writing in the next sentence:—

"Before I determine upon this point, however, I shall see what the Peishwa will write."

It would seem that long before his return to Poonah, the Peishwa had sent an agent to Dowlut Rao Sindhia, inviting him to come to Poona. Writing to the Secret Committee of Directors on the 19th April, 1803, the Marquess Wellesley said:—

"Scindhia plainly declared to Colonel Collins, that, until the communications of the agent despatched to his Court, by his Highness the Peishwa, (for the purpose of explaining the nature and extent of the engagements concluded between his Highness, and the British Government) should be received, Scindhia could not return a decided answer to the propositions which had been stated to him on the part of the British Government, with regard to his accession to the treaty of Bassein as a contracting party."

Had the Governor-General kept his faith, he would have released the Peishwa from the thraldom under which he had placed him, as soon as he discovered that the Peishwa had no mind to adhere to the terms imposed upon him by the Treaty of Bassein. But this was not what he and his compatriots in India wanted. Notwithstanding his positive assurance to the Secret Committee of the Court of Directors that he would not "compel the Peishwa to adhere to the faith of his engagements,

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at the hazard of involving the Company in a war with the combined Maratha States", he and his brother and the other British officials did everything in their power to force a war on the Marathas.

The part played by Colonel Collins in bringing about the war, requires special mention. Colonel Collins was Resident at the Court of Sindhia. He was one of those diplomatists whom the Marquess Wellesley had taken into his confidence, and with whose help he wove the threads of his dark policy all over India, which he filled with intrigues and wars. Colonel Collins had not proved so successful a diplomatist as the Resident at Poona, Colonel Barry Close. The star of the latter was in the ascendant, for he had, after all, succeeded in depriving the Peishwa of his independance. Colonel Collins, on the other hand, had been at the job, that is, forcing the scheme of subsidiary alliance on Sindhia for nearly four years, but without success. It would seem that he was smarting at his failure. It is on this hypothesis only, that we are able to account for his hostility to Sindhia and his determination to ruin that Maratha Prince.

Of course, it was mere hypocrisy on the part of the Governor-General to have assured the Honourable the Secret Committee of the Court of Directors that he would do nothing which might result in "involving the Company in a war with the combined

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Maratha States." The truth is that, almost ever since his arrival in India, he had been plotting to ruin Dowlut Rao Sindhia. He never concealed this. In his 'private and secret' letter dated Fort St. George, 8th March, 1799, to Lieut.-General Sir Alured Clarke, the then Commander-in-Chief in India, the Governor-General wrote:—

> "I am equally satisfied of the policy of reducing the power of Scindhia, whenever the opportunity shall appear advantageous."

He had let loose the hell of intrigues to effect this.

But the preparations were not quite complete when Colonel Collins was about to precipitate the Company into a contest with Sindhia. The "advantageous opportunity" had not yet arrived. They were yet trying to make the world believe that they had no intention of going to war with him. At first they were labouring to show that Sindhia had no hostile designs against the Company. At such a moment, therefore, the conduct of Colonel Collins placed them in a false position. Colonel Collins of course longed for the war. His task had been done. He had performed everything with which he had been charged. He had fomented domestic dissensions in Sindhia's household and also raised enemies against that Maratha Prince. He had corrupted Sindhia's army and had conspired with some of his commanders and officers. If he failed in imposing the yoke of the

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subsidiary alliance on the neck of that prince, he had the satisfaction of knowing that in a contest with the British forces, Sindhia would be utterly crushed. He was therefore anxious to hasten the war.

As said before, this conduct of Colonel Collins in precipitating the war did not commend itself to the Governor-General and his brother, for the simple reason that all the necessary preparations had not been yet completed. So we find that Major-General the Hon. A. Wellesley wrote on the 10th May, 1803, to Lieut.-General Stuart:—

> "I hope that Colonel Collins will have been induced to remain in Scindhia's Camp; I think that he was rather hasty in his determination to withdraw; and that, by withdrawing on the grounds of Scindhia's altering the direction of his march, he has done no good. Scindhia's ministers will still go on negotiating with Colonel Collins' native Agents, and they will persuade their Master that the absence of the Colonel from his camp is not a novel occurrence, and is not a sign of war. Thus we shall lose all the advantages of the check upon them of Colonel Collins's presence, and of his influence over Scindhia; and by the manner in which he has withdrawn, he has not given Scindhia any reason to fear the commencement of hostilities with the Company."

Colonel Collins was persuaded to remain with Sindhia so as not to "lose all the advantages of the check upon" Sindhia's people, which in non-diplomatic language means intriguing and conspiring with

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Sindhia's men. In the meantime Major-General Wellesley went on making all the necessary preparations for the war. He knew that the best time for making war upon the Marathas was the rainy season. In his 'Memorandum upon operations in the Maratha territory,' General Wellesley wrote:—

"The season at which it is most convenient to commence a campaign with the Mahrathas, is that at which the rivers, which take their rise in the Western ghauts, fill. This happens generally in the month of June. * * *

"The reasons why I think that the most favorable season for operations against the Maratha nation, are as follow:

"First the Maratha army is principally composed of cavalry, and their plan of operations against a British army would be to endeavour to cut off its communication with its rear, * *. As the rivers are not fordable, as there are no bridges, and no means of passing them except by basket boats, which it is difficult, and might be rendered impossible to procure, the fulness of the rivers operates as a barrier. It is certain, that the enemy cannot pass them in large numbers, and it is probable that they would not venture to throw across a small body, or rather, that they would not be able to prevail upon a small body to remain on a different side from the main body of the army.

"The inconvenience and delay which the British army experience in crossing the rivers by means of boats, when they are full, is trifling, and in fact they would experience no inconvenience or delay if good pontoons were provided, and a bridge were thrown across each river for the passage of the army. * * * Thus, then, we should enjoy all the advantage of a river not fordable, to shorten the line

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of our communication, which river our enemy could not pass with a large body of troops, and over which he would not dare to detach a small body; and we should have it in our power to pass it with much ease, and with as little inconvenience and delay, as we should experience if the river were fordable.

"Secondly, the Maratha country in general is but ill supplied with water. The rains which fill these rivers, although not heavy at the beginning of the rainy season, are sufficient to fill many nullahs; and an army has at this time some chance of being supplied with water, of which, in the dry season, it is certain it would never find much, and frequently none."

Thus, then, the British were not inclined to declare war upon Sindhia before the commencement of the rains. These were the reasons which prompted Major-General Wellesley to induce Collins to stay with Sindhia and thus to lull his suspicions regarding the hostile designs of the English. General Wellesley was busily engaged in all his warlike preparations. On the 14th May, 1803, he wrote to Lieut.-General Stuart:

"When I saw a possibility that we might have to contend with this confederacy, I wrote to Mr. Duncan (Governor of Bombay) to request that he would supply us with a bridge of boats, respecting which I sent him a detailed memorandum. He has made but little progress in this work, which is most essential, (in this country so much intersected with rivers, none of which are fordable in the rains.)"* * *

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On the same date, he also wrote to Colonel (afterwards Sir Thomas) Munro:—

"I learn from General Stuart, that he has desired you to supply me with twenty boats for the Malpoorba, and some boatmen.

"You know that the rivers will fill between the 14th and 20th of June; and I beg you will take early measures for providing this mode of passing them."

At the time when the Company's representatives in India were making all these warlike preparations, they knew fully well that neither Sindhia nor any other Maratha State had the remotest intention of declaring hostilities against them. This has been already stated above from their own despatches. So it is clear that the necessity for the war is not proved in any way by their writings.

But when all the preparations were complete, the Britishers tried to make out that they had been provoked to wage war by the conduct of Sindhia and the Raja of Berar. They changed their tone. On the 30th May, 1803, Mr. N. B. Edmonstone, Secretary to the Government of India, wrote to Lieut.-Colonel Close, Resident at Poonah:—

"It is scarcely possible that Scindhia should incur the hazard of hostilities with the British power, unless assured of the co-operation of the Rajah of Berar, and of Yeshwunt Rao Holkar, nor that Scindhia should proceed to Poona for hostile purposes, without being joined by the forces of

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one or both of those chieftains. Notwithstanding the repeated reports of the actual combination of those chieftains for purposes hostile to the British interests, his Excellency the Governor-General continues to discredit the truth of such rumors. Many of the circumstances related for the purpose of accrediting these rumors are manifest fabrications; and the object of the Marathas in circulating the report of the existence of a general confederacy of such a description, being evidently to intimidate the British Government and its allies, it is the duty of every British officer, civil and military, to employ his utmost efforts for the purpose of checking the dissemination of opinions calculated to impair the interests of our country in India, to encourage our enemies, and to depress the spirit of our friends. The terror of the British name will preclude such combinations, if the confidence of our allies be not shaken by the manifest decline of our own fortitude and decision in the season of our utmost glory and power. A premature disposition on our part to credit the possibility of the supposed confederacy may create the evil of which it supposes the existence, and may animate the counsels of our secret enemies with a spirit of audacity and rashness, which may demand an effort of our superior strength. It is, therefore, the positive order of the Governor-General, that you use the most active exertions to discountenance the rumors (which have been so assiduously circulated,) of the existence of an hostile confederacy between Scindhia, Raghoji Bhonsla, and Holkar, against the British power.

"Even if such a combination should take place, no danger can be apprehended from it to the British interests; indeed, it is not credible, that even with such a combination, the Maratha chiefs could venture to encounter the British power. His Excellency, however, adverting to

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every means of preventing such a conspiracy* or of restraining its operation, has addressed a remonstrance to the Rajah of Berar in terms corresponding with the representations which the Resident with Dowlut Rao Scindhia has been instructed to make to Scindhia, and has directed the post of Midnapore to strengthen with a view to alarm the Raja of Berar, for the safety of the province of Cuttack."

Thus the Company's servants went on making every preparation for the war, but with their consummate hypocrisy they pretended that their intentions were pacific. In the same letter from which extracts have been made above, the Governor-General wrote to Colonel Close :—

"In the event of Scindhia's return to the northward of the Nerbuddah, it may still be necessary to retain the army in the field for the purpose of preventing Holkar's troops to Poona, and of enforcing the complete acknowledgment of the Peishwa's authority throughout his immediate possessions * * *

which means that while the Britishers were trying to prevent Scindhia and the Raja of Berar from concentrating their troops within their own territories, they would themselves 'retain the army in the field' and thus threaten and provoke the other Maratha Powers to war.

It will also be observed that the Governor-

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* It was the British who were conspiring and not the Marathas.

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General equally dreaded the aggressive conduct of Holkar. He was afraid that Holkar might return to Poona or 'prosecute his predatory operations within the Nizam's dominions.' But he never sounded a note of war against that Maratha Chieftain. If the Britishers should have declared hostilities upon anybody, it should have been Holkar. Justice and policy demanded that. The Peishwa asked them to do so. The Nizam would have been glad of this. The other members of the Maratha Confederacy, namely, Sindhia and the Rajah of Berar, would have heartily co-operated with them in their war on Holkar. But the English were not prepared to chastise and punish Holkar. We have already stated before, our opinion regarding the cause of the leniency shown towards Holkar by the Company's representatives. Holkar was made the cat's paw by them and played into their hands by creating distractions in the Mahratta Empire and fomenting dissensions in Sindhia's household. While in his letter to Dowlut Rao Sindhia, dated Fort William, June 3rd, 1803, the Marquess Wellesley threatened him with war, he declared his peaceful intentions towards Holkar. He wrote to Sindhia :—

"The British Government is also willing to arbitrate any difference which may subsist between you and Jeswunt Rao Holkar, *with whom it is my wish to maintain peace.*"

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Why should Sindhia have accepted the arbitration of the British especially when they had neither prevented Holkar from invading his territories, nor assisted him against Holkar?

Colonel Collins was still with Sindhia. As said before, he was a firebrand. He wanted to precipitate the British Government into war with Sindhia. He knew the weak points in the military organization of that Maratha Prince and was therefore perfectly certain that a contest with him would result in a victory for his compatriots. It was this man to whose hands the Marquess Wellesley entrusted the negotiations. It was a foregone conclusion, therefore, that Colonel Collins would do everything in his power to bring about the war. To him, Mr. N. B. Edmonstone, Secretary to the Government of India, wrote on the 3rd June, 1803, a long letter, the purport of which was that Sindhia should give up all intentions of advancing towards Poona and return to his capital in Hindustan. It suited the purpose of the Governor-General to ignore the fact that the Peishwa had been under the protection of Sindhia and in fact raised to the Peishwa's *Musnad* by him. Sindhia, therefore, had an interest in the Peishwa's affairs. When Baji Rao fled from Poona, Sindhia, in an evil hour, asked the British to co-operate with him to restore the Peishwa. This request of Sindhia was now twisted by the Governor-General to mean that Sindhia had

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no right to interfere in the Peishwa's affairs since the latter had been restored to his *Musnad* without his help. Mr. Edmonstone wrote to Colonel Collins:—

"His (Scindhia's) exertions, however, have not contributed in any degree to the Peishwa's restoration. Aware of the doubtful issue of a further contest with the arms of Holkar, Scindhia solicited the co-operation of the British power, and continued in a state of inactivity at a considerable distance from the scene of action."

Poor Sindhia did not know the penalty he had to pay for soliciting the co-operation of the English in restoring the Peishwa. Of course he thought that as his predecessor had done them a good turn by being employed as the instrument of peace, when in all probability the foundation of their political power would have been uprooted but for the mediation of Madhoji Sindhia, the Britishers would, out of a sense of gratitude, comply with his request and co-operate in the restoration of the Peishwa. But had he known that it was through their machinations that he had been obliged to leave Poona and Holkar had been enabled to ravage his dominions, he would not have solicited their co-operation. The very fact of his soliciting their co-operation showed the interest he had in the Peishwa's affairs. It seemed, therefore, preposterous to Sindhia that he should hold no communication with the Peishwa whom the Britishers had taken under their protection.

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Moreover, the Peishwa invited Sindhia and the Raja of Berar to Poona. This is evident from the writings of the Governor-General, who had informed the Secret Committee of the Court of Directors that it was not his

> "intention to attempt to compel the Peishwa to adhere to the faith of his engagements, at the hazard of involving the Company in a war with the combined Maratha States."

It has been pointed out before, that this was pure hypocrisy to lull the suspicions of the Directors regarding his evil designs. He was a perfect dissembler and double-faced man at this time brooding over new schemes by means of which he hoped to stir up a war. When he had arrived in India, he found all tranquil, and immediately began to make plots and create tumults and forced others to take arms. Had he been sincere in the intentions which he expressed to the Court of Directors, he would have given an opportunity to the Peishwa to express his opinion. But he perfectly knew the opinion of the Peishwa. He knew that the latter desired to be released from the galling yoke of the British. Mr. Edmonstone, Secretary, wrote to Colonel Collins on 3rd June, 1803:—

> "It will be proper to apprize Scindhia that his proceeding to Poona under any pretext whatever, *excepting the express permission of his Highness the Peishwa approved*

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by the British Government, will infallibly involve him in hostilities with the British power."

How is this to be reconciled with the "intention" so distinctly expressed to the Directors of the East India Company that he (the Marquess Wellesley) would not compel the Peishwa "to adhere to the faith of his engagements, at the hazard of involving the Company in a war"?

The Governor-General also knew that the Rajah of Berar had been solicited by the Peishwa to help him and also invited to Poona. Some time in March 1803, the Rajah wrote a letter to the Prime Minister of his Highness the Nizam, which that sycophant and time-serving minister thought good policy to communicate to the Resident at Hyderabad on May 4th, 1803. There was nothing in this letter hostile to the interests of the Company in India. The letter proves that the Rajah of Berar had been invited to Poona by the Peishwa and further shows that the latter solicited the co-operation of the Maratha Chieftains to restore him to his *musnad* at Poona. The Maratha Chieftains were ready to respond to his appeal. In this letter, the Rajah of Berar wrote:—

"At this time on the 18th of Zekaud (March 15th) the aforesaid ministers arrived in safety at Nagpore, and they were accompanied by Narrain Rao Beyd on the part of Rao Pundit Purdhaun Baji Rao, and by Wunkut Rao the vakeel of Jeshwunt Rao Holkar, who reached this place

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on the same day. On the 25th of the same month also (March 20th) Idoo Rao Bashker the plenipotentiary minister of Dowlut Rao Scindhia arrived and had an interview with me; and in our public and private meetings they have repreatedly observed, in enumerating the circumstances which were entrusted to their verbal communication, that the causes of their mutual enmity and difference are perfectly evident and do not require a particular detail. That by the grace of God, their respective masters regard me as venerable and illustrious as their parents; and that they conceive me to be wise and thoroughly informed on all matters, and on all occasions; and as united in the prosperity and adversity of the state of Rao Pundit Purdhaun. Adverting to which, they never would depart from that line of policy and counsel which I might desire for the removal and eradication of their mutual enmity and dissatisfaction, and for the establishment of a plan for the adjustment of the state and government of Rao Pundit Purdhaun.

"In a similar manner also, my ministers Shreedhur Pundit and Kishen Rao Chitnavis have represented to me the secrets of the mind of Yeshwant Rao Holkar, in consequence of which, after ascertaining their objects and intentions, and having adjusted a plan for the union of Scindhia and Holkar, I deputed Yeshwant Rao Ramchunder and Wunkut Rao, the vakeel to Holkar; and in compliance with the earnest solicitation and desire of Dowlut Rao Scindhia, and the urgent entreaties of Judhoo Rao Bashker, entering my tents has been settled for the 23rd of Zehedge (16th April).

"After a meeting shall have taken place, and an arrangement for the reconciliation and union between Scindhia and Holkar have been effected, a specific plan for the

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adjustment of the state and government of Rao Pundit Purdhaun, such as the honor and integrity of the Raja indispensably calls for, and is calculated for the prosperity of the country and cities, and the happiness of mankind at large, shall, with a due attention to the complexion of the times, be maturely devised and executed."

It will be observed that long before the return of the Peishwa to Poona, he had written and sent an agent to the Raja of Berar, as well as one to Dowlut Rao Sindhia, appealing to them to restore him to his *musnud* at Poona. These chiefs responded to his appeal and were proceeding to Poona. With these facts before him, the Governor-General, had he been true to his word, should have released the Peishwa. But his 'intention' expressed to the Court of Directors, and so often quoted above, was merely hypocrisy to blind the Directors as to his evil designs. He knew that the people in England were against waging wars on Indian sovereigns and princes and it was therefore that he wrote that he had no

"intention to attempt to compel the Peishwa to adhere to the faith of his engagements, at the hazard of involving the Company in a war with the combined Mahratta states."

Mr. Mill truly observes:—

"Aware of the great unpopularity in England to which wars in India, except wars against Tippoo Sahib, were exposed; aware also of the vast load of debt which his administration had heaped upon the Government of India, a load which a new and extensive war must greatly aug-

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ment, the Governor-General has, in various documents, presented a labored argument to prove, that the appeal to arms now made by the British Government was forced, and altogether unavoidable." (Vol. VI., p. 306).

Here then, we come to know the reasons which induced the Governor-General to play the hypocrite and willingly mislead the Directors as to his real intentions. He wrote both to Dowlut Rao Sindhia and the Rajah of Berar not to proceed to Poona. He threatened them with hostilities and invading their territories, if they did not comply with his request or rather order. But while he was meditating war and making every preparation for it he wrote to the Secret Committee of the Court of Directors, on the 20th June, 1803:—

"Any opposition from the Mahratta chieftains to the complete accomplishment of the stipulations of the treaty of Bassein, appears to be improbable, and I entertain a firm hope that the British Government will be speedily relieved from the danger, which menaced our possessions in the Peninsula during the recent commotion in the Mahratta Empire, and that tranquility will be permanently established on our frontier by the operation of the alliance happily concluded with his Highness the Peishwa."

At the time when he was thus assuring the Court of Directors that the Treaty of Bassein would produce peace instead of war, it is probable that he had received from Colonel Collins, Resident with Sindhia,

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the letter dated 29th May, 1803. In that letter, Colonel Collins represented or rather misrepresented the arrogant (?) conduct of Sindhia, with the result that the Governor-General declared that the war was inevitable. But knowing this, the Governor-General was dishonest in assuring the Court of Directors that there would be no war. As already mentioned before, Colonel Collins had all along tried his best to bring about a rupture with the Marathas. He was not the man who would heal up differences and maintain peace. A few extracts from this letter would suffice to show the frame of his mind.

"As Dowlut Rao Scindhia did not instantly speak, Unna Bhasker (Scindhia's minister) took upon himself to say in reply, that his master had no intention whatever to invade the territory of his Highness the Peishwa or the Nabob Nizam, adding, that when Holkar was levying contributions on the city of Aurungabad, the Maharaja had desired that chief to desist from further exactions, and to retire from the Nizam's frontier. I said that I was highly gratified by these assurances, and observed that it only now remained for the Maharaja to declare that the negotiations between this Durbar, the Berar Raja and Holkar, were not entered into with any view to obstruct the completion of the treaty of Bassein.

"Unna Bhasker then plainly told me, that Scindhia could afford me no satisfaction on this point until he had conferred with the Berar Raja. I instantly replied, that the proposed interview between those chiefs was of itself, a sufficient cause to excite the suspicions of our government,

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inasmuch as the present tranquil state of affairs in the Deccan did not require the adoption of a measure, seldom resorted to but for hostile purposes. * * *"

* * * * *

"When I had done speaking, Unna Bhasker positively affirmed that his Highness the Peishwa, since his return to his capital, had repeatedly written to the Maharaja, and to the Berar Raja, desiring both those chiefs to repair to Poona. I expressed much surprise at this information, having as I told Unna Bhasker, understood from Colonel Close, that his Highness Baji Rao had requested Dowlut Rao Scindhia not to advance to that city. Here the Maharaja solemnly assured me that he and the Bhonslah had actually received the invitations mentioned by Unna Bhasker, and this prince further asserted that the Peishwa had never written to him, prohibiting his approach to Poona. To this assertion I only said, that no doubt a letter to that effect from his Highness would soon arrive here. Then reverting to the required explanation, I conjured Scindhia in language both urgent and conciliatory, to remove all my doubts and suspicions by an immediate and candid avowal of his intentions.

"Dowlut Rao in reply to those instances on my part said that he could not at present afford me the satisfaction I demanded without a violation of the faith which he had pledged to the Raja of Berar. He (Scindhia) then observed, that the Bhonsla was distant no more than forty coss from hence, and would probably arrive here in the course of a few days; that, immediately after his interview with that Raja, I should be informed whether it would be peace or war. These words he delivered with much seeming composure. I then asked him whether I must consider this declaration as final on his part, which question was answered

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in the affirmative by the ministers of Dowlut Rao Scindhia. Here the conference, which had lasted three hours, ended, and I soon after took a respectful leave of the Maharaja. Neither Scindhia, nor his ministers, made any remarks on the treaty of Bassein, nor did they request a copy of it.

"If it be true, that his Highness the Peishwa has really invited Dowlut Rao Scindhia to repair to Poona, of which fact the Maharaja assured me he had undeniable proofs under the seal of Baji Rao, Scindhia may possibly march to that capital, and allege that this measure was sanctioned by the orders of the head of the Mahratta Empire. I therefore sincerely hope that his Highness the Peishwa has not delayed to forward a letter to the Maharaja, prohibiting his advance to Poona."

As this letter produced the most lamentable war in India, it demands more than ordinary attention on the part of every writer on Indian history. How far Colonel Collins, who, as has been so often mentioned before, was prejudiced against Sindhia, correctly and truly reported the purport of the interview to the Governor-General, it is impossible to say. It should be also remembered that the medium of conversation was not English ; neither Sindhia nor his ministers knew that language. Colonel Collins, on the other hand, was not proficient in the languages of the East. Most of the conversation had to be carried on through the medium of an interpreter. Under such circumstances, it is difficult to say how far each party understood the meaning and intentions of the other.

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But presuming that Colonel Collins correctly under-stood Sindhia and his ministers, and truly reported everything that occurred in that interview to the Governor-General, this letter of Colonel Collins does not warrant any man not blinded by prejudice and passions to agree with the Marquess Wellesley to declare,

"Scindhia's language to Colonel Collins, however, has been insulting and hostile, and amounts to a positive act of aggression upon every received principle of the law of nations.*

From Colonel Collins' letter, it appears that the language of that gallant Christian officer to Sindhia was 'insulting and hostile,' and not that of the Maratha Prince. The Governor-General considered Sindhia's expression 'whether it would be peace or war,' as 'insulting and hostile.' But from the con-text of the letter, one is not justified to think so. The Resident was pressing Sindhia to express his intention regarding the proposed conference with the Rajah of Berar. Sindhia again and again answered that he was unable to give any satisfactory reply until the meeting with the Bhonsley would take place. But this did not satisfy the gallant Colonel.

* The Marquess Welesley's most secret and confidential letter to His Excellency Lieut.-General Lake, dated Fort William, June 28th, 1803.

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He pressed Scindhia for an immediate answer. Supposing Sindhia used the expression 'whether it would be peace or war,'—words which Colonel Collins has put in his mouth, this expression is neither 'insulting' nor 'hostile' nor amounts to a 'positive act of aggression upon every received principle of the law of nations.' The Governor-General is very fond of appealing to 'every received principle of the law of nations.' But it was convenient for him to forget that his conduct 'was a positive act of aggression upon every received principle of the law of nations.' He had assembled troops on the frontiers of every Maratha State without any provocation or cause. Under such circumstances Sindhia's expression, (presuming it was genuine and not fabricated by Colonel Collins) was neither 'insulting' nor 'hostile.'

It would further appear from Colonel Collins' letter that Sindhia had not fully understood the significance of the different articles of the Treaty of Bassein. The Rajah of Berar also was in the same situation. Their proposed meeting was mainly intended to discuss the Treaty and its provisions and then to decide what should be done. In this, they were acting quite within their legitimate province, and 'every received principle of the law of nations' did not authorize the British to prevent independent sovereigns and princes from meeting and discussing

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measures best calculated to secure their welfare and defence. The Maratha princes had not been fully acquainted with the provisions of the Treaty of Bassein and they also seem to have been alarmed at some of its articles. In his letter to the Marquess Wellesley received on the 31st July, 1803, Dowlut Rao Sindhia wrote:—

"I have received your Lordship's friendly letter notifying the conclusion of new engagements between his Highness the Peishwa and the English Company at Bassein, together with a copy of the treaty; and I have been fully apprized of its contents, which have also been fully communicated to me by Colonel Collins.

"Whereas the engagements subsisting between the Peishwa and me are such, that the adjustment of all affairs and of the concerns of his state and government, should be arranged and completed with my advice and participation, by the favor of God! through a regard to what is above stated, the degrees of mutual concord have so increased, that to this time no interruption or derangement of them has occurred on either side. Notwithstanding this, the engagements which have lately been concluded between that quarter (British Government) and the Peishwa have only now been communicated, and on the part of the Peishwa, to this time of writing, *nothing*. Therefore, it has now been determined with Raja Ragoojee Bhonsla, in presence of Colonel Collins, that confidential persons on my part and the Raja's, be despatched to the Peishwa, for the purpose of ascertaining the circumstances of the (said) engagements. At the same time no intention whatever is entertained on my part to subvert the stipulations of the treaty consisting

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of nineteen articles, which has been concluded at Bassein, between the British Government and the Peishwa, *on condition that there be no design whatever on the part of the English Company and the Peishwa to subvert the stipulations of the treaty, which, since a long period of time, has been concluded between the Peishwa's Sircar, me, and the said Raja and the Mahratta chiefs.*"

From the words put in italics in the above it is certain that Colonel Collins did not fully represent the views of Dowlut Rao Sindhia to the Governor-General. The Marquess Wellesley never condescended to take any notice of, or reply to, the above letter of Dowlut Rao Sindhia.

That the Maratha Confederates had not been unnecessarily alarmed at the Treaty of Bassein, would also appear from the fact that the Secret Committee of the Honorable Court of Directors of the East India Company condemned that Treaty on the ground of its involving the Company in a war with the Marathas. In their despatch dated London, 6th March, 1804, to the Governor-General in Council, the Secret Committee wrote :—

"As it was always our wish to avoid a connection with the Mahrattas at the expense or even at the serious risk of a war with any of the leading members of that confederacy, we deeply regret that such has been the result of the treaty concluded with the Peishwa at Bassein and we feel it necessary in consequence thereof at this early period,

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to convey to you our sentiments upon the present posture of affairs.

*   *   *   *   *

"The most prominent grounds of jealousy entertained by the Mahratta states of the late treaty, appear to arise out of the third and seventeenth articles, the former introducing and permanently stationing a commanding British force in the Peishwa's dominions, the latter binding his Highness without the stipulations being reciprocal, not to commence any negotiation with any other power without previous communication with the British Government, which two stipulations they consider as tending to place under our control and guidance the legitimate head of their Empire.

*   *   *   *   *

"We are therefore desirous, whilst the support to which his Highness is entitled under the treaty of Bassein (so long as he shall remain faithful to his engagements), is afforded to him in the fullest manner, that we should not hesitate to relax in such stipulations as were introduced into that treaty rather for our, than for his Highness's accomodation. When we refer to the Peishwa's former reluctance to the introduction of a subsidiary force within his dominions, and when we couple this with the decided repugnance which undoubtedly exists to the arrangement lately concluded, on the part of the other states, we cannot doubt that a relaxation of this condition of the treaty will prove highly satisfactory to his Highness, and we also flatter ourselves that by this relaxation a material objection in the feelings of the other states may be removed."

It seems that the letter which the Marquess Wellesley received on the 31st July, 1803 from

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Dowlut Rao Sindhia and which has been inserted above, was not communicated to the Secret Committee by the Governor-General. Had he done so, the Secret Committee would not have written the following sentences condemning Sindhia and the Rajah of Berar. The Secret Committee wrote:—

"Whilst we are ready to admit that states jealous of their independency might naturally entertain some alarm at stipulations capable of being represented to them as placing the head of the empire under the immediate control of a foreign power, we cannot avoid noticing the deceitful and disingenuous conduct pursued by Scindhia and the Raja of Berar previous to the rupture. Instead of openly avowing their sentiments and endeavouring by amicable explanation to obtain relief from any stipulations of the treaty which could be supposed to affect their interests, they in terms disclaimed any ground of objection, and disavowed any intention of obstructing this connection."

From the letter of Dowlut Rao Sindhia received on the 31st July, 1803 by the Marquess Wellesley, it is evident from the sentences put in italics that that Maratha prince expressed his dissatisfaction at the Treaty of Bassein; neither Dowlut Rao nor the Raja of Berar ever 'in terms disclaimed any ground of objection.' It was the interest of the British to misrepresent the views of the Maratha confederates and suppress facts and documents which were not convenient for carrying out their nefarious plans and schemes. In ignorance of all the facts of the case,

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the Secret Committee wrote the above sentences charging Scindhia and the Raja of Berar with 'deceitful and disingenuous conduct.' These Maratha princes were 'endeavouring by amicable explanation to obtain relief ;' and for this very purpose, they met and were holding counsels, but the Company's representatives peremptorily told them to separate from one another. It was they who provoked and precipitated the war and not the Maratha princes.

The Secret Committee even ordered the restoration of the conquered territories to the Maratha confederates. They wrote :—

"Upon the whole our wish is that a modification of the treaty should at all events take place in conformity to the above instructions, not on the ground of concession but upon a deliberate consideration of the system of policy which appears to us to be the best-adapted to the genius and the character of the people, * * * We see no adequate motive for continuing the war, and should the success of our arms be such as under all the circumstances appear to you in prudence to warrant a demand of some concessions from our opponents, we desire that the demand be framed upon principles of great moderation and with a view to the improvement of the military security rather than the extension, of our present dominions.

"We must however impress most strongly on your minds that the early termination of the war is the object to which we desire your efforts may be most earnestly directed, and although we have thought it right to advert to the possible expediency of requiring certain sacrifices in

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the nature of reparation from our opponents, you are by no means to consider such suggestions as controlling your conduct in case you should be of opinion under all the circumstances that peace is likely to be more firmly established and future causes of dissension more effectually obviated by an entire restoration of all our conquests."

Of course, the Company's Secretary in India did not give effect to the recommendations of the Secret Committee.

The Governor-General was very profuse in his assurances to Scindhia and the Bhonsla that the Treaty of Bassein had not interfered with their independence and just rights and privileges, nay even went so far as to tell them that that Treaty provided 'for the safety of the several branches of the Mahratta Empire.' While he was thus assuring them that the Treaty of Bassein would do them no harm, he was at the same time, repeating them his offer of subsidiary alliance. But he knew that he was playing the hypocrite, for his assurances to them were false, for by his own showing the Treaty of Bassein concluded with the Peishwa was not calculated to provide 'for the safety of the several branches of the Maratha Empire.' At the time when he was trying his best to ensnare any one of the Mahratta Powers, he did not conceal his view, that by succeeding to ensnare one, others also would be drawn into

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the meshes of his scheme of the subsidiary alliance. For, he wrote, that

"It may reasonably be expected, that the success of a negotiation, for that purpose, with Dowlut Rao Scindhia, will materially promote the complete accomplishment of his Excellency's views, by inducing the other Mahratta powers to concur in the proposed arrangement, with a view to avoid the *dependent and subordinate condition to which they must be reduced, by their exclusion from an alliance, of which the operation, with respect to them, must be, to control all ambitious views and aggressive designs on their part,* without affording to those powers the benefits of the general guarantee.".

Regarding this, Mr. Mill truly observes:—

"The doctrine of the Governor-General, therefore, was, that, in this manner, everyone of the Mahratta states would become dependent upon the English Government; those who accepted the alliance, by the alliance; those who did not accept it, by being deprived of it; the same happy effect, in two opposite cases, by the same ingenious combination of means." (Vol. VI., pp. 270-271).

So it was simple hypocrisy and dishonesty on the part of the Governor-General to assure the Bhonsla and Sindhia that the Treaty of Bassein would provide for their safety and secure their independence. The Mahratta princes knew the full meaning of the diplomatic language of the British. The treaty of Bassein threatened their independence. This has been

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expressed by no one in a more explicit manner, than by the Marquess Wellesley's chief counseller, the Hon'ble Mr. (afterwards Sir George Hilaro) Barlow, who wrote:—

"The restoration of the head of the Mahratta Empire to his government through the influence of the British power, in fact, has placed all the remaining states of India in this dependent relation to the British Government. If the alliance with the Peishwa is maintained, its natural and necessary operations would in the course of time reduce Scindhia * * * and the Raja of Berar, to a state of dependence upon the Peishwa, and consequently upon the British power, even if they had acquiesced in the treaty of Bassein." (Wellesley's Despatches III, 187).

The same train of arguments led the Maratha princes to the same conclusion. So if any one was guilty of "a positive act of aggression upon every received principle of the law of nations," it was not Dowlut Rao Sindhia but the Governor-General, for his ensnaring the Peishwa and indirectly trying to bring the other Maratha States within the meshes of his abominable scheme.

Every 'principle of the law of nations' demanded that the British should punish their own ally the Peishwa for his inviting Dowlut Rao Scindhia and the Raja of Berar to Poona. There can be no doubt that the Peishwa invited them. Colonel Collins' letter to the Governor-General mentions it. The despatches of Major-General Wellesley bear testimony to it.

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The latter wrote to Lieut.-General Stuart on the 4th June, 1803 :—

"Our situation is rather critical in this country. The Peishwa has hitherto done nothing for his sirdars who came with me, and none of them have marched from Poona. He has broken the treaty by not producing an army, and he has broken his word with me. He has told Colonel Close that he has urged Dowlut Rao Scindhia not to come to Poona; and that chief declares that he has invited him and the Raja of Berar to his capital.

* * * * *

"Upon the whole, I am concerned that the alliance will not work on the footing of the treaty. But at all events, he (the Peishwa) has broken the treaty by not producing his army; and the British Government must be considered as at liberty to act according to its sense of its own interests."*

* Again, writing on the 19th June 1803, to Lieut.-General Stuart, Major-General the Hon'ble A. Wellesley said :— "The Peishwa's servants are very profuse in promises, but very sparing in performance; and we have enjoyed so little of the resources of the country, which it is so obviously the advantage of the inhabitants to supply to us, that I am almost induced to suspect counteraction on the part of the government. I shall be convinced of it, if the Peishwa omits much longer to write to Scindhia, of which I apprized you of the intention, but he has not yet written." Thus it is evident the Peishwa had invited Scindhia and the Raja of Berar to come to Poona. According to 'every received principle of the law of nations', there was no *causus belli*

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The Governor-General knew that the Peishwa was averse to the fulfilment of the terms of the Treaty of Bassein. According to 'every received principle of the law of nations,' the Governor-General should either have punished the Peishwa or annulled the Treaty of Bassein, and withdrawn from his alliance altogether. But this would not have suited his purpose. So in violation of 'every received principle of the law of nations,' the Governor-General made up his mind to declare hostilities upon the Maratha confederates. He empowered his brother, Arthur Wellesley, to declare war or peace with the Raja of Berar and Dowlut Rao Scindhia as the circumstances and his own military preparations would dictate him to do.* In a lengthy despatch marked 'Secret,' to the Hon'ble Major-General Wellesley, dated Fort

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to go to war with the Mahratta confederates, who had accepted the invitation of a sovereign, whom it was the policy of the English to look upon as the executive head of the Mahratta Empire.

* The delegation of plenary powers by the Marquess Wellesley to his brother, the General Sir Arthur Wellesley and General Stuart in 1803 to wage war and conclude peace with the vanquished Princes was illegal. Two eminent lawyers, named Mr. R. Ryder and Mr. William Adam, were consulted and they were of opinion, that Lord Wellesley was not legally competent to delegate his powers to his brother and others. The opinions of the two lawyers named above are given in Pearce's Wellesley, Vol. II, pp. 343 *et seq.*

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William, June 26th, 1803, the Governor-General wrote:—

"The present state of affairs in the Mahratta Empire, and the security of the alliance lately concluded between his Highness the Peishwa and the British Government require, that a temporary authority should be constituted at the least possible distance from the scene of eventual negotiation or hostilities, with full powers to conclude upon the spot whatever arrangements may become necessary either for the final settlement of peace, or for the active prosecution of war. In such a crisis, various questions may arise of which the precise tendency cannot be foreseen, and which may demand a prompt decision. The issue of these questions may involve the result of war or peace, and in either alternative the delay of reference to my authority might endanger the seasonable despatch and the ultimate prosperity of the public service.

* * * * *

"Your approved ability, zeal, temper, activity and judgment, combined with your extensive local experience, your established influence, and high reputation among the Mahratta chiefs and states, and your intimate knowledge of my views and sentiments concerning the British interests in the Mahratta empire, have determined me to vest these important and arduous powers in your hands.

* * * * *

"I further empower and direct you to assume and exercise the general direction and control of all the political and military affairs of the British Government in the territories of the Nizam, of the Peishwa, and of the Mahratta States and chiefs."

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The Governor-General was not content with issuing the above directions empowering his brother to conclude peace or prosecute war with the Marathas. He was suffering from that disease which in modorn times is called "earth-hunger." He wanted to fleece the Raja of Berar and Dowlut Rao Scindhia of their most fertile and important territories. On the following day, that is, 27th June 1803, he wrote a 'most secret' letter to his brother. In this letter, he showed himself in his true colors. This letter reveals the secret motive of the Governor-General for going to war with the Marathas. He wanted to bring under the direct administration of his co-religionists and compatriots more territories of the continent of India. He wrote:—

"On the receipt of this despatch you will desire Colonel Collins to demand an explicit declaration of the views of Scindhia and of the Raja of Berar, within such a number of days as shall appear to you to be reasonable, consistently with a due attention to the period of the season, and to the facility of moving your army, and of prosecuting hostilities with the advantages which you now possess.

"If that explanation should not be satisfactory on such grounds as in your discretion you may state to Colonel Collins, you will desire Colonel Collins to repair to your camp under a proper escort.

"In this event, or in other state of circumstances which may appear to you to require hostilities, ... I direct you to use your utmost efforts to destroy the military power of either or of both chiefs (Scindiah and Raja of Berar)

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. . . . It is particularly desirable that you should destroy Scindiah's artillery, and all arms of European construction, and all military stores which he may possess . . . . the actual seizure of the person of Scindiah, or of Ragojee Bhonslah, would be highly desirable, ... In the event of hostilities, you will take proper measures for withdrawing the European officers from the service of Scindiah, Holkar, and of every other chief opposed to you.

You are at liberty to incur any expense requisite for this service, and to employ such emissaries as may appear most serviceable. . . . . . In the event of hostilities, I propose to dispatch proper emissaries to Gohud, and to the Rajput Chiefs. You will also employ every endeavour to excite those powers against Scindiah . . . . . You will consider what steps may be taken to excite Cashee Rao Holkar against Jeshwunt Rao, ... The effectual security of our interests in the Mahratta Empire is the strongest barrier which can be opposed to the progress of the French interests in India; the early reduction of Scindiah . . . . is certain, and would prove a fatal blow to the views of France." (Duke of Wellington's Dispatches, Vol. I. pp. 203-206).

In this letter, for the first time, the Governor-General brings forward the French influence in the court of Dowlut Rao Scindhia as a reason for attacking and altogether crushing the power of that Maratha sovereign. The Governor-General was subject to Franko-phobia. It is probable that his alarm at the French influence was merely a pretext to make the people of England believe that he had just grounds to wage war on the independent Maratha Powers. The natives of England at that

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time were doing everything they could, to reduce the power of France. The great Pitt was spending money like water to bribe every Christian State of Europe against France. But no man in his senses could have believed that France by any possible means could have at that time, sent men and materials of war to the shores of India. Mr. James Mill has thoroughly exposed the Governor-General's Franko-phobia. When Tippoo was killed and his palace was looted, it was alleged that several documents were discovered in the state achives of Seringapatam, showing the intrigues which that Mahomedan ruler had been carrying on with the French. It has been mentioned, that there are reasons for suspecting the genuineness of those documents. Scindhia was not totally annihilated and his palace was not looted. Had it been so, who knows if the British would not have discovered correspondence between Dowlut Rao and Napoleon?

The Governor-General was not content with empowering his brother, Arthur Wellesley, to declare war or peace with the Marathas. Lieut.-General Lake was at that time, the Commander-in-Chief in India. In a previous chapter, a few words have been already written to show the character which he possessed. He was also taken into the confidence of the Governor-General. On the 28th June, 1803, the latter wrote to him a 'most secret and confidential'

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letter. At that time, General Lake had been in Oude, busily engaged in making preparations for war on Scindhia. The Governor-General wrote to him

"to commence the measures for assembling a force, with a view to active operations against Scindhia. You will at the same time enter into my extreme solicitude to avoid every proceeding which can involve expense, and which may not be indispensable to our success. A few days must decide positively whether war will become inevitable. From that moment we must press forward without hesitation, if the alternative should leave no prospect of peace.

"You will be able, * * to collect forces at the necessary points or at least to issue your first orders for that purpose without occasioning any alarm of war."

At the same time, the Governor-General transmitted to him a note containing instructions for corrupting the chiefs and men subject to Scindhia's authority. The note is so important, for it teems with maxims and principles promulgated by Machiavelli, that readers are recommended to peruse it in the original in the Marquess of Wellesley's Dispatches (Vol. III. 167-170).

Thus it will be seen that all those whom the Governor-General empowered to negotiate with the Marathas were soldiers and therefore anxious for earning the honors and glories and distinctions of war. None of them was desirous of peace. Arthur Wellesley had tasted blood in the campaign against Tippoo, which whetted his appetite for more blood.

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Besides, that campaign not only brought him 'honors and distinction,' but most substantially enriched his pockets. The membership of the Mysore Commission had given him his first initiation in the intrigues of occidental diplomacy, opened up a new field of observation, enlarged his mental horizon, and inspired him with hopes of turning his experience to good account in other parts of India. So he tried to take full advantage of the opportunity which fell to his lot by the extraordinary powers which his brother entrusted him with, for concluding peace or war with the Marathas. Everything pointed to war as the royal road to distinctions and honors. And so he eagerly promoted it.

The same remarks apply with equal force to Lieut.-General Lake. On a wider field, he was trying to utilize the experience he had gained in Ireland. War was the only means to enable him to do so. And so he also eagerly seized every circumstance calculated to bring it about.

But more eager than either Lieut-General Lake or Major-General Wellesley, was Colonel Collins for war. This officer was the Resident with Dowlut Rao Scindhia. In British Indian history, Residents correspond to resident ambassadors, a practice, established in the European system since the days of Machiavelli. These residents are diplomatists and it was referring to these, that General Gordon, that

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Christian soldier and statesman, who met with his death at Khartoum, wrote :—

"We are an honest nation, but our diplomatists are conies, and not officially honest."* Again, "I must say I hate our diplomatists. I think with few exception, they are arrant humbugs."†

The Governor-General had not yet issued his final orders regarding the prosecution of war on the Maratha Confederates when he received on the 5th July 1803, a letter from Colonel Collins dated 12th June, 1803. From this letter it appears that Colonel Collins considered it beneath his dignity to personally go and have an interview with Dowlut Rao Scindhia. He deliberately insulted the Maratha prince by sending his agent, Ganpat Roy. However, Dowlut Rao Scindhia granted an interview to this agent of Colonel Collins on the 11th June 1803. How far Gunput Roy correctly reported the substance of the conversation which took place with Scindhia, it is impossible to say. But on this report of Gunpat Roy, Colonel Collins wrote :—

"As it appeared to me that the evasive conduct of this Durbar was practised, solely with a view to gain time, and having been informed that Jeshwunt Rao Holkar, was actually on his march to join the Maharaja, I conceived that your Excellency would deem me inexcusable, were I to

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* Gordon's Diary p. 15.

† Gordon's Diary p. 158.

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defer bringing the question of peace or war to an immediate issue. Accordingly, I addressed a memorial to Dowlat Rao Scindhia calculated to produce this effect, and I herewith do myself the honor to forward copies thereof, in English, and Persian, for the information of your Lordship."

From the memorial, it is clear that Colonel Collins never cared to see Sindhia after the interview he had with him on the 28th May, 1803. The tone of the memorial is not very respectful. He concluded the memorial by saying:—

"should the Maharaja decline giving Colonel Collins the satisfaction which he now demands, in this case the Colonel requests that Maharaja Dowlat Rao Scindhia will furnish him with a party of horse to escort him as far as Aurangabad, together with supplies of grain sufficient for the subsistence of his sepoys and followers, until their arrival at that city."

The gallant Colonel's agent on presenting the memorial to Scindhia, demanded a written reply to it. That which is a curse in the despatch of official business in the British administration of India, namely, red-tape, the British officer would not tolerate in Scindhia. He would not even give Scindhia time to consider the memorial and then answer it. Scindhia sent a verbal message per Colonel Collin's agents, which the latter requested Scindhia to commit to writing. The gallant British officer had not the

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decency to wait for a reply. But in indecent haste with the object of prejudicing the Governor-General against Scindhia, he wrote :—

"Mirza Bauker and Gunpat Roy, are this instant returned. When they were admitted to the presence of Dowlat Rao Scindhia, no person was with him but Ballajee Koonjer. * * Scindhia said, that as yet he had not conferred on matters of business with the Rajah of Berar, but that I might rely on having the explanation I required in two, or three days. Mirza Bauker requested that this answer might be committed to writing, but which the Maharaja would not permit. The Mirza and Gunput Roy then took their leave of him in order to return to me.

"On receiving this verbal reply, I wrote to Dowlut Rao Scindhia that I considered it as final, and therefore sincerely lamented its tendency, at the same time I requested that the Maharajah would order his servants to supply me with grain as soon as possible, it being my intention to proceed to Aurangabad without delay."

Thus Colonel Collins had made up his mind on bringing about a rupture with the Marathas. For, he himself did not go to Scindhia, nor did he wait for his written reply. Within twenty-four hours of writing the above to the Governor-General, he was furnished with a written reply from Scindhia. The latter wrote to the Resident as follows :—

"I received your friendly letter along with a paper conveying your request for dismission, and understand the whole of both their contents. The affairs of our respective

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states are one and the same, and you are deputed to preserve the relations of friendship on the part of the Honourable Company. I have been prevented from the continuance of the rain from going a second time to see Rajah Raghoojee Bhonslah. Whenever the weather clears up, and that I can proceed to the Camp of the Rajah, the attendance of Balajee Koonjer and of Narrain Rao Beed will be ordered, and their relations taken into consideration, and after consulting together, you shall then be made acquainted with whatever may be determined on; with respect to your departure, it is not proper to use haste on this head; intimation was personally given to Gunput Roy, whose report of the matter you will have received."

Scindhia's letter was a friendly one. He tried to maintain peace but the British were on the war-path. The manner in which Colonel Collins left Scindhia's camp will be mentioned further on. The Resident's letter of the 12th June was received by the Governor-General on the 5th July, 1803. On its receipt, he wrote a 'private and most secret letter' to Lieut-General Lake. He wrote :—

"I have just now received a letter from Colonel Collins, under date the 12th of June, which has determined me to carry into execution with all practicable speed, the general outlines of the plan of war against Scindiah, stated in my letter of the 28th of June. I shall now write to you from day to day, but I would not delay this communication for a moment. Scindhia's object is to gain time. Ours must be to act, between this time, and the month of October. The seizure of Agra would be a real and masterly blow. I know you will attempt it, if prudent."

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The Governor-General was highly pleased with the conduct of Colonel Collins for the prospect of bringing about the rupture with the Maratha Confederates. His Secretary, Mr. Edmonstone, wrote to Colonel Collins, on the 6th July, 1803 :—

"I am directed by his Excellency the most noble the Governor-General to acknowledge the receipt of your despatch No. 258, under date 12th June, and to communicate to you his Excellency's highest approbation of your conduct in the important crisis of affairs described in that despatch. His Excellency considers your conduct on this occasion to have been distinguished by the greatest degree of spirit, firmness, and decision, as well as by the most sound judgment and discretion, and by that moderation which becomes the representative of the British Government even under the most insulting and unwarrantable provocation. His Excellency entirely approves the memorial which you presented to Dowlut Rao Scindhia. You will find by your subsequent receipt of communications made to you by his Excellency's authority, that the course which you have pursued on the present occasion, is entirely conformable to his Excellency's intention, and to the principles of policy by which his Excellency is desirous of regulating the conduct of the British Government towards Dowlut Rao Scindhia and the Raja of Berar."

In plain language, it means that the Governor-General wanted war and was therefore pleased with Colonel Collins, for his bringing it about.

But while he had made up his mind to deluge the country with bloodshed and murder, and to carry

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fire and sword through the territories of those who, or rather their predecessors, had helped the British in the acquisition and maintenance of their political power in India, the Marquess Wellesley received two letters from Lord Castlereagh, which seemed to disturb the equanimity of his mind, and make him waver in his determination on war. Lord Castlereagh had succeeded Mr. Dundas at the head of the Indian affairs in England. In his first letter, marked "most secret," dated London, February 14th, 1803, but received by the Marquess Wellesley on the 6th July, 1803, Lord Castlereagh wrote:—

"My letter to your Lordship, bearing date the 15th of November, apprized you of the reasons we then had for apprehending that a squadron, preparing at Brest, was destined for the East Indies. His Majesty's Ministers thought it expedient at that time to send your Lordship instructions, upon the presumption of that intelligence being correct, and to take naval precautions accordingly.

"This intention on the part of the French Government, if it ever existed, (which I much doubt,) has long since yielded to the pressing exigencies of their service in St. Domingo. * * * * *

"However uncertain and critical the state of things must be deemed to be in Europe, I think I can venture to relieve your Lordship's mind from any apprehension, connected with the interests immediately entrusted to your care, which, * * are happily less exposed to sudden attack than our possessions in any other quarter of the globe.

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"Under this satisfactory reflection, that the Company's dominions are in a great degree grown out of the reach of danger from the native powers, and cannot be threatened, if at all from Europe, without long notice and preparation, your Lordship may proceed confidently in executing all the arrangements originally in your contemplation, connected with the restoration of peace. * * *

"The chairs propose bringing the plan, of which your Lordship is in possession, for the reduction of the debt, before the Court on Wednesday next."

In the second letter dated London, March 16th, 1803, and also received by Lord Wellesley on the 6th July, 1803, Lord Castlereagh asked the Governor-General to take steps to reduce Indian debt. He wrote :—

"I am sure your Lordship will keep in view how much will be gained in positive strength by directing our exertions, even in war, against the debt, so long as there is little appearance of the enemy being enabled to menace India. However jealous France is of your power in the East, and however steady she may be in her purpose of aiming at positions, from which she might one day hope to shake that power, yet I can not persuade myself that she has, or can have for a length of time, the means to attempt any direct attack against possessions so defended as ours are by the army now on foot.

"Whatever efforts France may be able to make in Europe, India cannot be considered as more exposed now than in the years 1793-4-5, &c., whilst Tippoo was yet formidable. I must therefore indulge a sanguine hope that your Lordship will find it practicable to adopt a system,

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even in war, which shall be compatible with our financial objects, and that the surplus revenue, as in the years alluded to, will be still applicable in a large amount to the reduction of debt. If peculiar difficulties arise, we must make corresponding exertions; but let us save our means till those difficulties appear, as far as prudence will permit."

These letters placed the Governor-General in a very awkward position. The home authorities urged peace, while he had committed himself to the prosecution of war. The former enjoined on him economy, but the Governor-General was determined on a course of policy which would entail inevitable expense. In such a situation, he once, it seems, seriously thought of carrying out the intention he had expressed to the Court of Directors not

"to attempt to compel the Peishwa to adhere to the faith of his engagements, at the hazard of involving the Company in a war with the combined Maratha States."

It appears, he convened his principal counsellors and discussed the matter with them on the 11th July, 1803. His principal counsellor was Mr. (afterward Sir George Hilaro) Barlow. He was the Governor-General *elect*, that is to say, the Court of Directors had decided that in the event of the death, resignation, or departure from India of the Marquess Wellesley, Mr. Barlow should take charge of the Government of India. There is an English saying, "set a thief to catch a thief." This man's character and

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conduct have been fully revealed to the world by one of his co-religionists. This was Sir John Malcolm. Barlow was not worse than the Marquess Wellesley. But while Malcolm had nothing but words of adulation and admiration for the Marquess, but for whose help and the interest he took in him, Malcolm, in all probability, would not have occupied the positions of trust and responsibility in the administration of India which he filled, he had no good words to say for Barlow. This is easily explained when the fact is remembered that Barlow as Governor of Madras had injured Malcolm. Malcolm's condemnation of the Machiavellian policy of Barlow will be referred to, in its proper place.

From the important position which Barlow occupied in the Indian administration, his opinions carried great weight with the Marquess Wellesley. On the 12th July 1803, he submitted a memorandum to the Governor-General in which he strongly urged immediate declaration of war on the Marathas. He wrote:

"Conceiving it may be satisfactory to your Lordship to know what has occurred to me on a deliberate consideration of the important question discussed yesterday, I shall do myself the honor of stating the result. * *

"It only remained, therefore, to determine whether good policy required our persevering or withdrawing, under the unexpected circumstances of the total inability of the Peishwa to fulfil his part of the engagements, of the probability of hostilities with France, of the part taken by

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the Rajah of Berar, and the confederacy formed between Scindhia, the Raja of Berar, and Holkar, of the certainty of the approaching dissolution of the Nizam, and of the nature of the orders received from England.

"If we abandon the alliance, and withdraw our forces, (whatever may be the reasons we may assign for the measure), no other construction will be given, both by friends and enemies, to this change of policy but this; that we were at least doubtful of the success of the impending military operations. They will never believe that in the present advanced stage of the business, and after all the declarations which have been made by our ministers at the Maratha Courts, that we should abandon a plan which has been pursued with unremitting perseverance for a course of years, and the advantages of which to our interests are so obvious, but from an apprehension of our inability to repel the opposition which has been raised to the consolidation of our alliance with the Peishwa. What will be the effect of the impression on the minds of our friends and enemies? Our friends will no longer entertain their present implicit confidence in our power and protection and our enemies will make all India resound with shouts of triumph at our having yielded the field to them. The mischievous consequences which must be produced by this change in the sentiments of the states of India with respect to the British power, cannot be calculated.

"But is it certain, in the event of our withdrawing our forces, that we should be allowed to retain the countries ceded to us by the Peishwa to indemnify us for the expense of the measures undertaken for his support? Is it not to be apprehended that the power which might succeed in usurping the authority of the Poona Government, would endeavour to compel us to relinquish those countries, by

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committing continued depredations in them, in the confidence that the same motives which induced us to avoid war when our armies were in the field, and in the most advantageous positions, would influence us still more strongly, when we had to collect those armies again, and which the operations of the most successful campaign could not be expected to place in their present advantageous positions? There is no conjecturing to what lengths the presumptuous character of the Marathas might impel them under such circumstances. Thus we might be compelled to go to war under the disadvantages of loss of national character, and of limited means, and probably after having afforded to the French an opportunity of connecting themselves as auxilliaries with some of the Maratha States.

"Should this be the result, the Government would incur a heavy load of responsibility in England. Its conduct would be first censured for engaging in the alliance, next, for withdrawing from it, and lastly, for placing itself in a situation which reduced it to the alternative of engaging in a war under the disadvantages above stated, or of sacrificing the national character by relinquishing the retained territories.

"With respect to the French, supposing the present questions in Europe not to lead to an immediate rupture, we are now certain that the whole course of their policy has for its object the subversion of the British Empire in India, and that at no distant period of time they will put their plans into execution. It is absolutely necessary for the defeat of these designs, *that no native state should be left to exist in India, which is not upheld by the British power, or the political conduct of which is not under its absolute control.* The restoration of the head of the Maratha Empire to his Government through the influence of the

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British power, in fact, has placed all the remaining states of India in this dependent relation to the British Government. If the alliance with the Peishwa is maintained, its natural and necessary operations would in the course of time reduce Scindiah (the power which may already be said to be in the interests of France) and the Raja of Berar, to a state of dependence upon the Peishwa, and consequently upon the British power even if they had acquiesced in the treaty of Bassein. But their unjust opposition to this treaty affords us an opportunity of at once reducing their power to a state that will remove every obstacle to the consolidation of the alliance with the Peishwa, and to the attainment of all its advantages. When can we hope for another opportunity equally favorable, or (under all the probable consequences of withdrawing from the alliance,) when can we hope to have all India again at our command? * * * * * Our army, well equipped, has established itself within the heart of the dominions of these chiefs, and within a few marches of their camp, where they are collected without money, resources, or provisions, and where there is every prospect we shall destroy or disperse their whole force at one blow. It is scarcely possible that their military power could be placed in circumstances more favourable for our effecting its destruction." (Marquess Wellesley's Despatches, Vol. III., pp. 185 *et seq*).

Barlow's special pleading for devouring the independent states of India shows the extent to which the wrong-doing prevailed. The unscrupulous Britishers of that period never troubled themselves about the Laws of Nations, much less of the Rights

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of Man. In the words put in italics are disclosed the real reasons for their going to war with the Marathas. It is impossible for any one to justify the war on ethical grounds, or even grounds of political expediency, not to speak of the grounds of the Law of Nations.

The Marquess Wellesley was now encouraged by the opinion of his great counsellor to order the Commander-in-Chief to carry fire and sword into the territories of the Maratha princes. On the 18th July, 1803, he wrote in a 'secret and confidential' letter to Lieut.-General Lake:—

> "I consider an active effort against the Marathas, I mean Scindhia and Berar, (for the Peishwa is *ours*) to be the best possible preparation for a renewal of war with France. You will therefore act confidently, and you will use every effort to prepare for the early execution of the very able plan of operations which you have framed."

While the English were making all these preparations for waging war on, and cutting the throats of their neighbours, what were the Mahratta princes doing? It has been said over and over again, that these princes had no intention of going to war. Not only did they express their pacific intentions, but their want of war-like preparations is a strong proof in evidence of the fact that at first they never thought of crossing swords with the English. In his letter of

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the 12th June, 1803, Colonel Collins wrote to the Marquess Wellesley :—

"The distress which has prevailed here, for some days past, is realy great; *attah* sells at five seers for a rupee, grain at five and a half, and grass is scarcely procurable, even at the rate of fifteen rupees for one bullock load. The foregoing detail will enable your Excellency to form a judgment of the wretched state to which Scindhia's troops will be reduced, in the event of his prosecuting hostilities, since the prices of all kinds of provisions will, it is expected, daily increase; moreover, there is not, I am credibly informed, fifty thousand rupees in the camp of the Maharaja."

Do these circumstances show the hostile intentions of Scindhia? Had he been originally inclined to go to war with the English, should he not have made preparations for it? He was master of the most fertile tracts of India and so he could have easily brought plenty of money, and provisions and troops with him, had he known that he would have to cross blades with the English. But since he made no warlike preparations, it is evident that his intentions were pacific. His enemies knew this and they forced war on him. Mr. Barlow and every British administrator in India advised the Governor-General to take advantage of this situation of the Mahratta confederates. It was the English who provoked the Mahrattas to war, it was they who were the aggres-

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sive party and declared hostilities without sufficient cause.

It appears that Colonel Collins had an interview with both Doulat Rao Scindhia and the Raja of Berar on the 4th July, 1803. His own version of the conversations with those princes and their ministers, clearly shows that those princes had not been fully acquainted with the provisions of the Treaty of Bassein and they sincerely professed peace. Of course that gallant officer wanted war and therefore declared that the 'friendly professions' of those princes were insincere.

His letter dated 6th July, 1803, as well as the letters of the two Mahratta princes inserted in the Duke of Wellington's Despatches, Vol. I., pp. 207-212, are of great historical importance. From them it is evident that the Mahratta confederates wanted peace and not war.

But these letters of Scindhia and the Raja of Berar were of no avail in changing the mind of the Governor-General or rather of his brother, Major-General Wellesley ; for it was he who had been empowered to conclude peace or war with the Mahratta confederates. In reply to these letters, Major-General Wellesley wrote to Colonel Collins, as well as to Scindhia, letters which leave no doubt of his hostile intentions. Dating his letter from "Camp,

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14th July, 1803," General Wellesley wrote to Colonel Collins:—

"Dowlut Rao Scindhia and the Raja of Berar have declared in their letters to the Governor-General, that they have no intention to obstruct the arrangement concluded at Bassein between the British Government and the Peishwa; and that they are desirous of maintaining the relations of amity which so long subsisted between the British Government and them, and that they will not ascend the Adjuntee ghaut, or march towards Poona.

"I am sorry to observe, however, that they still intend to advance with their armies to the Adjuntee ghaut, upon the Nizam's frontier, notwithstanding their peaceable declarations. These declarations have been preceded by others of a directly opposite tendency.* The chiefs have declared, that they were united for the purpose of attacking the British Government and their Allies†; . . . . ."

(Duke of Wellington's Despatches Vol. I., p. 219).

Major-General Wellesley's letter to Dowlat Rao Scindhia was not a very courteous one and it was against every 'received principle of the law of nations.' It left no doubt in the minds of the

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* Where and when?

† When and to whom did these chiefs make this declaration? Neither in the Despatches of the Marquess Wellesley, nor in those of his brother, is there any record of the chiefs having made such a declaration. One is therefore fully justified in concluding that this was a pure fabrication either by the resident with Scindhia, Colonel Collins, or the future Duke of Wellington.

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Mahratta confederates that the Britishers were determined on hostilities. This letter was, as it were, an ultimatum to them. In his letter to Scindhia, General Wellesley asked him to withdraw ; but with that cunningness, dishonesty and perfidy which characterize diplomatists, no period was fixed when he should withdraw. Writing to Colonel Close, Resident at Poona, on the 17th July, 1803, General Wellesley said :—

"I have not fixed when he (Dowlut Rao Scindhia) should withdraw : First, because I wish to keep in my own breast the period at which hostilities will be commenced; by which advantage it becomes more probable that I shall strike the first blow, if I should find hostile operations to be necessary : Secondly, there is every reason to expect instructions from the Governor-General, applicable to the present situation of affairs in India, as well as in Europe. * * * * *

"By avoiding to fix a day on which Scindhia must retire, I have it in my power to alter my course of action, in conformity to these instructions, in case that measure should be necessary."

By his own showing, this wolf admits how he could produce the pretext of muddied stream at his convenience to devour the heathen lamb Scindhia. The Mahratta confederates understood as much. Totally unprepared as they were for the eventually of war, it would have shown their cowardice, had they yielded to the threats of the

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British They also commenced making war-like preparations.

Colonel Collins had threatened Scindhia with his departure as far back as the 12th June, 1803. But the did not depart. It would have been better for all parties had he left Scindhia's court in the middle of June. His mind was made up for bringing about war between the Mahrattas and the English. He was biassed against the Mahratta confederates. Under such circumstances, keeping him in the responsible position of a negotiator with the Mahrattas, was a crime, if nothing worse. But it was the policy of the British authorities in India to keep this man with Scindhia so that he might intrigue with, and corrupt Scindhia's officials and men. On the 22nd July, 1803, Colonel Collins wrote to Major-General Wellesley :—

"It appears by the extract of the letter to your address from his Excellency the Governor-General under date the 27th ultimo, transmitted to me by Mr. Secretary Edmonstone, that I am not at liberty to leave this court unless by your desire. I have to request your instructions for the guidance of my conduct in the event of refusal or procrastination on the part of Dowlut Rao Scindhia, or of Raghojee, to separate and retire with their forces to their respective countries."

General Wellesley was not as yet prepared to order Colonel Collins' withdrawal, for by so doing he would have lost "all the advantages of the check" upon Scindhia's men. There are strong grounds for

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suspecting that Colonel Collins did not truly represent Scindhia's views to the Government of India. The published despatches of the Duke of Wellington authorize us to suspect Colonel Collins' good faith. Dating his letter on 5th October, 1803, Major-General Wellesley wrote to Ballojee Koonger:—

"I have received your letter.* When Colonel Collins was the British Resident in the camp of the Maharaja Dowlut Rao Scindhia, you were there in the character of Vakeel on the part of the Peishwa; it is probable, therefore, that you were not so well acquainted with what passed at the durbar of that chief as you are at present, when you write in the character of one of the Maharaja's ministers; if you had been, you would not have written that *Colonel Collins had quitted the Camp without apprizing the Maharaja of his intentions, or going through the customary forms.*"

Of course, General Wellesley tries to make out that the statement of Ballojee Koonger was not correct and defends the conduct of Colonel Collins. But the words put in *italics*, undoubtedly suggest that there was some foul play on the part of Colonel Collins. It should be remembered that Ballojee Koonger wrote this after the Battle of Assayee when Scindhia had been vanquished and lay at the mercy of the English. Would he have ventured to falsely

* This letter is not among the published despatches of the Iron Duke. It would have been very interesting for historical purposes to have published this letter.

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accuse the representative of the English who were the victors? He knew fully well, the manner in which the English would have punished Scindhia for bringing a false charge against their late Resident with him.

Again, the letter of General Wellesley to his brother, the Govenor-General, dated 11th November, 1803, incidentally mentions the part played by Colonel Collins in bringing about the war. General Wellesley wrote :—

> "a vakeel has been sent here by Dowlut Rao Scindhia to treat for peace.
>
> "The name of this person is Jeswunt Rao Goorparah. * * * He appeared anxious to prove that Dowlut Rao Scindhia had been desirous to remain at peace with the British Government, and that if Colonel Collins had not quitted his camp upon receiving the letter addressed to me, which immediately preceded the commencement of hostilities, the war would not have taken place."

General Wellesley did not take pains to disprove the assertion of Scindhia's vakeel. No evidence has been brought to disprove Scindhia's allegation against Colonel Collins' conduct. It would be mere affectation on the part of any one to believe that Colonel Collins was not guilty of foul play in his dealings with Scindhia. With the statements of two reliable men amongst the Mahrattas, one of whom could have been subjected to a very searching cross-examination at the hands of General Wellesley, had he grounds

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to suspect his veracity, we are forced to conclude that Colonel Collins acted against "every received principle of the law of nations" in thus bringing about this war

We have to depend for our information and guidance on the letters and despatches of some Christians who were anything but honest and trustworthy where they had to deal with non-Christians. However from the records written by them, there is ample evidence to show that the Company's servants in India left no stone unturned to inveigle the Mahrattas into war.

On the receipt of Major-General Wellesley's letter of the 14th July, 1893, Colonel Collins addressed a note to Dowlut Rao Scindhia on the 22nd July, 1803. In this, he wrote:—

"As Colonel Collins understands that Maharaja Dowlut Rao Scindhia held a conference with Raja Ragojee Bhoonslah last night, for the purpose of determining on the answer that should be given to the letter addressed to the Maharaja by the Hon. General Wellesley, Colonel Collins requests that Maharaja Dowlut Rao Scindhia will favor him with a communication of the result of that conference; and as the Hon. General Wellesley expects an early reply to this letter, the Colonel trusts that the Maharaja will no longer delay writing to the General, in order to satisfy him that his requisitions will be immediately complied with."

As no reply was received within twenty-four hours, Colonel Collins addressed a memorial to

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Scindhia on the 23rd July, 1803. On the same day, he also presented a similar memorial to the Rajah of Berar. In this memorial, Colonel Collins again urged Scindhia and the Raja of Berar to separate from one another and return to their respective capitals. On the 24th July, 1803, both the Maratha princes sent in their replies to this memorial. The Raja of Berar wrote :—

"The letter which you sent to me is received, and the particulars of its contents thoroughly understood; the answer to it depends on a meeting between me and Dowlut Rao Scindhia Bahadur; after we shall have met and personally discussed the subject of it, the reply will then be certainly committed to writing."

Sindhia wrote :—

"Your letter is received, and its contents understood.

"Whenever Senah Saheb Soubah Raja Ragojee Bhonslah and I shall meet, and be seated together in the same place, you will then be requested to attend; and whatever is to be stated will then be discussed : an interview between the Raja and me is indispensable on this occasion. If you are resolved on having an audience, come to-morrow, when only two ghurees of the day shall remain. My house is your own."

Accordingly, Colonel Collins had an audience with Scindhia on the 25th July. As an answer to the oft-repeated request of Scindhia's returning to his own

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capital in Hindustan, his minister observed to Colonel Collins :—

"That the forces of Dowlut Rao and of the Raja of Berar were encamped in their own territories, that those chieftains had solemnly promised not to ascend the Ajuntee ghaut, nor to march to Poona: that they had already given his Excellency the most noble the Governor-General assurances in writing, under their own seals, that they never would attempt to subvert the treaty of Bassein, which assurances were unequivocal proofs of their friendly intentions: that they proposed sending vakeels to the Peishwa, in order to obtain an assurance from his Highness similar to that which they had lately received from the Hon. General Wellesley: lastly, that the treaty now negotiating between Scindhia and Holkar was not completely settled, and that until it was finally concluded, the Maharaja could not return to Hindustan."

These arguments adduced by Scindhia's minister in defence of his master's stay in the Deccan were very cogent and valid. Of course, Colonel Collins tried to traverse them, but it appears that he failed in his attempt. In the shape of a letter dated 26th July, 1803, he informed General Wellesley the result of the interview he had with Scindhia on the previous day. This letter was received by General Wellesley on the 31st July, 1803. General Wellesley in acknowledging the receipt of this letter wrote to Colonel Collins :—

"They (the Maratha confederates) now pretend that they want the same assurance from the Peishwa, although they must know that his Highness has no power to do

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them any injury, excepting that which he derives from the support of his Government by the British troops.

"The fact that Scindhia has not concluded his peace with Jeswunt Rao Holkar, which is now acknowledged, is the strongest reason for pressing forward at the present moment the decision, whether there shall be peace with security, or war; besides it is in conformity with the instructions from his Excellency the Governor-General."

On the 30th July, 1803, Dowlut Rao Scindhia wrote to Colonel Collins:—

"I have received your letter, together with a copy of your address to Senah Saheb Soubah Bahadur, and thoroughly understood the contents of both.

"In consequence of the haste with which you require an answer, and urge your departure, Senah Saheb Bahadur came to-day to my tent, where we had an interview. I shall return Senah Saheb Bahadur's visit at twelve o'clock to-morrow, on which day do you also repair to his tent, when only six ghurries of daylight shall remain, that we may, in the presence of each other, discourse of whatever is to be discussed. It is not proper for you to hurry your march. Do not depart, but come to-morrow, at the time appointed, to the tents of Senah Saheb Soubah Bahadur. Your going off with such expedition is repugnant to good sense."

He had an interview with both those chieftains on the 31st July, 1803. How far he has correctly reported the purport of this interview, it is impossible

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to say. In his letter to General Wellesley dated 3rd August, 1803, he writes:—

"In my conference with the Maharaja and the Raja of Berar, on the 31st ult., when I observed to those chieftains, that, if they did not instantly retire from the frontier of the Nabob Nizam, you would no longer delay taking advantage of your present position, Sreedhur Punt, without hesitation, replied, that, should the Honorable General Wellesley commence hostilities, or order the British forces to advance towards the Adjuntee Ghaut, in either of these events, Raghojee Bhonslah and Dowlut Rao Scindhia would consider themselves at liberty to march their troops in whatever direction they might think proper."

One should be very chary in believing that either of the Maratha princes, or any one of their ministers made use of such threatening words as are put in the mouth of Sreedhur Punt. The object which Colonel Collins aimed at was war and not peace. And so it is very probable that he deliberately misrepresented the substance of the conversation he had with the Maratha confederates at his last interview with them. This view, that is, his deliberate misrepresentation, receives weight from the fact that both those chieftains addressed on the 1st August, 1803, an amicable letter to General Wellesley.*

From this letter it will be observed that they

* Wellington's Desp. Vol. I., p. 276.

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were desirous of peace; they tried their best to avoid war.

Colonel Collins unceremoniously left Scindhia's camp on the 1st August, 1803. The war was now inevitable. On the receipt of this news and of the letter mentioned above, the Hon'ble Major-General Wellesley declared war on the 6th August, 1803. On that day, he wrote a very discourteous letter to Dowlut Rao Scindhia and issued a memorandum in which he justified the war. As these documents are of great historical importance, they are published in Wellington's Despatches, Vol. I, pp. 287, 289 etc.

Thus it will be seen that this war was one of wanton aggression without any provocation, waged by the British against those with whom a sense of gratitude should have dictated them to preserve peace. The ancestors of both the Raja of Berar and Scindhia had greatly helped the English in those days when they had not established their supreme political power in India but were struggling hard to gain a footing on the Indian soil. "The sins of the father are visited on the heads of his descendants" is a very true saying. Madhoji Scindhia and Moodajee Bhonslay were traitors to their country for the help they rendered to the foreigners. Madhoji Scindhia and Moodajee Bhonslay were lacking in forethought and proper statesmanship, for not following the example and advice of Nana Fadnavis in withholding

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all help to the East India Company's representatives in India. Their successors had to rue for their follies.

Appendix to Chapter XXIV.

SIR PHILIP FRANCIS ON THE MARATHA WAR.

It was several months after the Second Maratha War had been commenced, that its news reached England. Sir Philip Francis was then a member of Parliament and as such he moved the House of Commons on the 14th March, 1804 :—

"that the 35th clause of the 24th of the King, should be read, *viz.*—'whereas to pursue schemes of conquest and extension of dominion are measures repugnant to the wish, the honour, and policy of this nation, be it enacted, &c."

Then addressing himself to the speaker, he said :—

"In moving to have this clause now read, I have two objects, 1st, to remind the House of their own unanimous resolution, on which the subsequent act of Parliament was founded; and then to show that, in the motion which I propose to submit to the House, I am governed by that resolution, and aim at nothing but to inforce the execution of that law. . . . . I do not believe it will be asserted by any man, that it is very right to pass laws for the better government of a distant dominion, and very wrong to inquire whether such laws are obeyed or not. . . . . . All

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I contend for, in the first instance, is, that a British Governor who commences a war in India, is *prima facie* doing that which the law prohibits; that his own act of itself puts him on his defence; that he is bound to justify on the case; and that, until he has so justified his conduct, the presumptions are against him. . . . . . Since the prohibitory act passed in 1783, I appeal to the House whether we have heard of anything from India but war and conquest; many victories, and great acquisitions, with only now and then a short interval of repose, to take breath and begin again. . . . . . almost all these wars are supposed to originate in acts of provocation and aggression committed by the weak against the strong. The strength of any single Indian state at any time, and now I believe of all of them put together, is not to be compared to the military power and resources of the English. . . . . . . We hear little or nothing of what the opposite, and possibly the injured party, have to say for themselves. Ever since I have known anything of Indian affairs, I have found that the prevailing disease of our governments there has been a rage for making war. . . . . . I ask, is it proper or not that Parliament should know, why this war was undertaken, for what purposes it has been pursued, and with what success it has been attended; and finally, has it the sanction and approbation of the Court of Directors, and of His Majesty's ministers? . . . . The orders given by Lord Wellesley, in consequence of which the hostilities began on the Malabar coast, must have been dated sometime in June or early in July last. I beg of the House to observe the dates; we are now in the middle of March; so that 8 months and a half must have elapsed since the orders were given, and no information received at home on that subject. This is a case which the act of Parlia-

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ment has foreseen and provided for. The words of the law are, that 'in all cases, where hostilities shall be commenced or treaty made, the Governor-General and council shall, by the most expeditious means they can devise, communicate the same to the Court of Directors, together with a full state of the information and intelligence, upon which they shall have commenced such hostilities or made such treaties, and their motives and reasons for the same at large.' Until it shall appear in evidence that this delay of information directly from Lord Wellesley is not owing to any neglect or omission on his part, I am bound to presume that there is a fault somewhere."

He concluded his speech by moving:—

"That there be laid before this House copies or extracts of all dispatches received from the Governor-General of Bengal, or from the presidencies of fort St. George and Bombay, as far as such dispatches relate to or account for hostilities, now or lately subsisting between the said governments and any of the Mahratta princes or states; with the dates of the receipts of such dispatches."—"Copies or extracts of all the correspondence between the said governments and any of the Mahratta princes or states, relative to the said hostilites."—"Copies or extracts of all orders or instructions sent to India by the Court of Directors of the East India Company, on the same subject."

Lord Castlereagh informed the House that he was ready to comply with the motion as soon as the despatches were received. So Francis withdrew his motion.

Three weeks afterwards, on the 6th April, 1804,

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he again brought forward his motion, which was opposed by Lord Castlereagh, for he said "that no direct communication had been received from Bengal, either by sea or land, concerning the hostilities in question." So again Francis had to withdraw his motion.

A month afterwards, on 7th May, he brought forward his motion, when the first two portions were agreed to, but the last one was negatived by a majority of members.

But the papers were not produced, for they had not been received from India.

Again, on the 15th March, 1805, Sir Philip Francis asked the question whether at that day the Court of Directors or the Select Committee had received any direct communication from Lord Wellesley of the origin and motives of that War?

Lord Castlereagh's answer being in the negative, Sir Philip Francis said:—

"The fact of itself deserves the attention of the house; since nothing can be more precise and peremptory than the injunction of the law, by which the Governor-General and Council are ordered, in all cases where hostilities shall be commenced, to communicate the same to the Directors, by the most expeditious means they can devise, with a full state of the information and intelligence upon which they shall have commenced such hostilities, and their motives and reasons for the same at large. I now, Sir, beg leave to give notice that it is my intention, with per-

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mission of the house, to bring under their consideration a general view of the state of the British dominion in India, and to make a motion thereupon. . . . ."

Accordingly on April 5, 1805, he made "a masterly and luminous speech" on the state of affairs in India. He said:—

"With regard to the origin of our connection with India, it was hardly necessary for him to remind the house, that it was originally purely commercial, but it was marked on the part of the native princes with every appearance of good understanding, and even kindness. They not only afforded us every facility for carrying on an advantageous trade, but actually conferred on us immunities and exemptions which many of their own subjects did not enjoy. It was, in a mercantile point of view, wise in the native princes to encourage trade with foreign nations. But while their commercial eye was open, their political eye was closed. They did not act on those principles which had so effectually excluded European nations from the dominion of China. It was not till 1765, that our situation in India sustained an important change. Our first connection with Bengal, was in the character of adventurers. After that period we began to assume the character of sovereigns. But what was then the language of Lord Clive, a man to whom we owe the erection of our immense eastern dominion? His language was, 'my resolution and my hopes will always be to confine our conquests and our possessions to Bengal, Behar and Orissa. To go farther is, in my opinion, a scheme so extravagantly ambitious and absurd, that no governor and council in their senses can ever adopt it, unless the whole system of the Company's interest, be first entirely new modelled. . . . . . .' He himself knew

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that the government of that day fully adopted these principles of limited dominion. When in 1773 he went with the other commissioners to India, the government gave the most positive instructions to see that the same principles were followed up, and the commands of the directors were absolute on the subject."

Then Francis referred to the acts of 1784 and 1793 prohibiting wars of conquest in India. He proceeded :—

"Of the origin or justice of many of the wars in India, the house and the public were frequently, or rather always, without the means of forming a proper judgment. We had never any evidence but the testimony of one of the belligerent powers against the other, and therefore such testimony was to be received with diffidence. We knew only in general that wars had been begun, that great acquisitions were made, and we gave ourselves little trouble to ascertain how far they arose, either out of justice, or necessity. The native princes of India had no ambassadars to plead their cause. They saw their country overrun, their wealth destroyed, and then they had only the satisfaction of being told that they had been actuated by lawless ambition. Many members might not, perhaps, be aware that there formerly existed in the government of Bengal a commission of Persian correspondence, through which our relations with the native princes were conducted. In looking, however, to the vast body of papers on the table, he had not been able, after the most diligent inquiry, to find above three or four short documents, containing no intelligence of the slightest importance. This correspondence was now, therefore, either altogether abolished, or had for a considerable time been suspended. Thus were

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the house and the public without means of judging of the origin of contests in India. Our commissionaries might be honest persons, and their representations might be frequently founded in fairness and truth. But we were forced to believe them, without knowing what was the nature of the remonstrances of the native princes, or what sacrifices they had made for the preservation of peace." . . . . . .

Then after referring to the Indian princes who had been extirpated by the British, he said :—

"But with all this extent of Empire, with all that variety of dominion, the thirst of conquest remained unbounded, and the positive law of parliament for the limitation of our territories has been again violated, by a war with the Mahratta powers. The pretext for the war struck him as absurd, and indefensible in the highest degree. There was not the slightest ground for supposing that the Mahrattas entertained any views hostile to our power. . . . . . He knew it was common to represent the native princes in the most odious light, as absolute monsters of depravity; but from the language of those employed under the government of Lord Wellesley, it was easy to see in what light these descriptions should be considered."

Then the manner in which Colonel Palmer and Colonel Close represented the Peishwa in their letters to the Governor-General, extracts from which have already been given in a previous chapter, was mentioned by him at some length. Then he said :—

"Thus it is that a native prince is loaded with abuse by the Government of India, that he is called on to give up a great proportion of his dominions, and all this for the purpose of securing tranquil possession of his throne.". . .

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He

"directed the attention of the house to the manner in which Scindhia was spoken of by the officers in the Indian Government. It is in terms such as these that a high spirited Prince was vilified and traduced, though it did not appear that he ever entertained any views hostile to our interests. . . . . . He was aware that the great argument against the Mahrattas was their harbouring French officers among them, with views evidently hostile to our superiority. It was even asserted that there was an army of 14,000 French troops, under Captain Perron. Of the existence of such a body of troops there was not a single tittle of evidence before the house. . . . . . Indeed, after the minutest investigation, he found that there were not in the whole Mahratta army more than 12 French officers; . . . . . . As to any wish of Scindhia to admit French troops into his dominions, he denied its existence. It was notorious that Scindhia abhorred the idea of foreign troops in any part of his states . . . . In no view of the case, did he think, then, that the justice or necessity of the war had been established in a satisfactory manner. The reluctance shown against the proud and insolent terms of our treaty was natural. It would have been astonishing if it had not existed. The hon. gent. desired members to put the matter to their own feelings. Was it not natural for a high spirited Chief to spurn at terms so abject? To be told that the capital of the Mahratta Empire was to be in the hands of a British garrison, and to be supported by the native princes, was surely the extremest degradation. It was unquestionably adding injury to insult. . . . . . . Human nature was the same in all countries on some grand subjects of reasoning and feeling. If we should commend European

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sovereigns resenting insolence and repelling oppression, should we not allow something to the feelings of a Mahratta Chief, indignant at seeing the Capital of his Empire in the hands of a foreign garrison?—He called on gentlemen to think and feel, and then he thought there could be little doubt on the result of their inquiries. He was himself not satisfied that the war against Scindhia was just or necessary. He found nothing in the papers on the table to support such an opinion. . . . . . . He said, with great emphasis, we first had commerce, commerce produced factories, factories produced garrisons, garrisons produced armies, armies produced conquests, and conquests had brought us into our present situation."

He concluded by moving:—

"That this house adheres to the principle established by its unanimous resolution of the 28th of May, 1782, ... 'that to pursue schemes of conquest and extension of dominion in India, are measures repugnant to the wish, the honour, and the policy of this nation.' "

This motion found support from 46 members only, while against it were as many as 105, thus showing a majority of 59.

Thus ended the discussion on the Mahratta War in the British Parliament.

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CHAPTER XXV.

CAMPAIGN OF INTRIGUES & CONSPIRACIES AGAINST SCINDHIA.

We have already mentioned the causes which brought the war about and the motives and conduct of those Britishers engaged in it. We are forced to rely exclusively on the Despatches and letters of intensely partisan Englishmen, and therefore it is necessary for us to discount freely their statements. The dominant motive of these contemporary chroniclers, writing from an English point of view, was clearly to justify the policy of the Marquess Wellesley towards the Marathas. There is, unhappily, no counter-pleading (as yet published), written by a contemporary, to set forth the case of the Marathas. But in the progress of the war and the prosecution of the hostilities the chronicles of the Europeans enable us to trace the movements of their armies, if not those of their enemies and the conduct of their troops in the field.

It has been already mentioned that General Wellesley did not intimate to Scindhia or the Raja of Berar the date on which they should withdraw their troops from the position they had occupied within

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their own territories but not far from the Nizam's frontiers. In the proper sense of the language of diplomacy, no *ultimatum* was sent to the Maratha confederates. But with the unceremonious way in which Colonel Collins, the Resident with Scindhia, left the camp of that prince, the last hope for peaceful negotiations was gone.

The Maratha confederates perfectly understood the gravity of their situation. But without losing their presence of mind, they collected the portion of their army still remaining faithful to them and prepared for the crisis.

But they did not know the tactics which the British were employing against them. If the Marathas were the vanquished party, they did not lose their prestige in fair fight, but because the English had opened campaigns of conspiracies and low intrigues and pitted traitors against them. It is necessary to speak in detail of the conspiracies and intrigues of the English against the Marathas.

The Maratha confederacy, in its palmiest days, consisted of the Raja of Berar, Scindhia, Holkar and the Guicowar, all owning the Peishwa as their executive head. But when the British attempted to sow dissensions amongst the Marathas, and used every art to arouse jealousy and hatred towards each other, they succeeded in detaching the Guicowar from the Confederacy. The Guicowar was the first to join the

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British. The Peishwa was now merely a puppet in their hands. Holkar also played into their hands. But it was not quite certain that he would not join the others, namely, Scindhia and the Raja of Berar. Holkar was, of necessity, compelled to veer with the wind until change of times and circumstances would force him to declare himself. It was therefore necessary to leave no stone unturned to induce him not to join the Raja of Berar and Scindhia. We have already narrated the means which had been adopted in bringing this about. While the Bhonslay and Scindhia were being bullied, Holkar alone was being flattered and cajoled by the English. The then representative of the house of Holkar was not a statesman. He easily fell into their snares. On the 16th July, 1803, Major-General Wellesley wrote a letter which flattered the vanity of Holkar.* From the concluding paragraph of this

* Major-General Wellesley wrote :—

"Much time has elapsed since I have had the pleasure of hearing from you, although I am anxious to cultivate the good understanding which has subsisted between the Honourable Company's government and you.

"With this view, I now send you a copy of the treaty concluded at Bassein between the Honourable Company and Rao Pundit Purdhaun; from the general defensive tenor of which you will observe, that the peace and security of India are provided for...............

"That being the case, whatever others may do, I have

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letter, it would seem that smooth and specious promises had been held out to Holkar to deter him from joining Scindhia and the Raja of Berar. It is probable that Holkar had been duped with such promises. This conjecture is based on the facts that Holkar did not render any assistance to Scindhia and the Raja of Berar while the Britishers were carrying fire and sword in their territories; but when the Maratha confederates were compelled to conclude peace with them, it was Holkar who declared hostilities against the English and invited the others to join him. Holkar's conduct can only he explained on the supposition that when he discovered that the English had played false with him and had fed his mind with promises which they knew they would never fulfill, he saw no other alternative than that of going to war with them. However the English stole a march on him by preventing him from joining the Raja of Berar and Scindhia by holding out smooth though false promises.

But there was possibility of his joining the con-

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little doubt but that you will conduct yourself in the manner which your own interests will dictate, and that you will continue in peace with the Company.

"I send this letter in charge of Kawder Nawaz Khan, a respectable officer, who enjoys my confidence, and who will explain anything you desire to know respecting my wishes."

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federates. So the Britishers had entered into intrigues to weaken him in the event of his so doing. One of Holkars' officers was Amir Khan, a Pathan soldier of fortune. It was with him that the English intrigued and conspired. He was encouraged to betray Holkar. Amir Khan joined Jeswant Rao Holkar since the latter had made his escape from Nagpur. It was necessary to weaken Holkar by buying over Amir Khan. The English tried to make it appear that the Nizam had entertained this Pathan adventurer. The Nizam, of course, could not do anything of the sort, without their advice (or rather, their order), for the subsidiary alliance had placed him altogether at their mercy.

On the 28th, April 1803, Major-General A. Wellesley wrote to Lieut.-General Stuart that:—

> "Meer Khan (Amir Khan?), Holkar's Sirdar, in command of his largest detachment, still keeps open his negotiation with the Nizam to enter his Highness' service. On the 2nd of May, therefore, we shall be in greater strength than ever at Poonah, and have attained one great object of our expedition; and, if Holkar should not be weakened by the defection of Meer Khan, at least his confidence in that chief must be shaken."

From the above extract, could there be any doubt that the Nizam had been ordered to carry on intrigues with Amir Khan? This conjecture derives additional weight from General Wellesley's letter to

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Major Kirkpatrick, Resident at Hyderabad, dated 3rd May, 1803, in the course of which he wrote:—

"I have received several letters from Colonel Stevenson upon the subject of the negotiation between the officers of the Government of his Highness the Nizam, and Meer Khan, to take that chief into his Highness' service. It appears that his Highness consents to take into service only 3000 men, whereas the number of Meer (Amir?) Khan's followers amounts to 25,000 according to his statement.

"From my experience of these native armies I doubt whether Meer Khan will produce at muster more than double the number of men that his Highness consents to receive; but when I am considering the means of defending his Highness' long line of frontier from the plunder of a light body of horse, I cannot refrain from recommending that, whatever may be Meer Khan's numbers, his Highness should take them into pay. If hostilities should be commenced, the expense will be more than repaid to him and the people under his government, and the very circumstance of the purchase of the service of a chief commanding so large a body of horse, of such repute as Meer Khan, and much in the confidence of Jeswunt Rao Holkar, will certainly shake the general confidence of his army, and may have the effect of preventing the threatened hostilities."

Major-General Wellesley's despatches show that the Nizam and his officers had grounds for believing that the English would help them in paying a part of the expenses to be incurred in hiring Amir Khan and his troops. Dating his letter from Poona, 31st

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May, 1803, General Wellesley wrote to Major Kirkpatrick, Resident at Hyderabad:—

"I have the honor to enclose a letter which I have received from Colonel Stevenson, written in answer to one from me of the 26th instant, in which I sent him a copy of the report of Moonshee Uzzeez Oollah, on the subject of the supposed consent by Colonel Stevenson, that the British Government should pay half of the expense to be incurred in hiring Meer Khan and his troops.

"The transaction has not the appearance of a very candid one, either on the part of the Government at Hyderabad, or on that of the Nizam's officers with Colonel Stevenson. However he resisted firmly all their attempts to induce him to sign a paper by which he should engage that the British Government would pay half of the expense; * * * *

"I cannot tell, from his letter of the 28th, whether he had despatched the letter to Meer Khan of which I sent you the translation." * *

General Wellesley's letter of the 22nd June, 1803, to Major Kirpatrick throws much side-light on the shady transactions of the English with Amir Khan. He wrote:—

"There appears certainly to have been a mistake or misunderstanding between Colonel Stevenson and Raja Mohiput Ram, in respect to the share of the expense of hiring the troops under Meer Khan, *which it was supposed the British Government would defray*. In consequence of my orders, however, upon that subject, Colonel Stevenson has set Meer Khan right, in regard to the British Government being bound by his letter to that chief, by a second

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letter, written with the knowledge of the Sirdars in the Nizam's service. * * * *

"It would certainly be desirable to discover whether Raja Mohiput Ram really misunderstood Colonel Stevenson's intention, or wilfully deceived his employers. But, considering all the circumstances of the present moment, I believe that it would be best to defer the inquiry to a future period."

The words put in italics show the impression that had existed in the minds of the Nizam's officers. It does not appear that there was ever any inquiry to discover whether Rajah Mohiput Ram wilfully deceived his employers. But it passes our understanding why Raja Mohiput Ram should have wilfully deceived his employers. However, Amir Khan was not entertained by the Nizam. The reason for the Nizam not taking him in his service is nowhere given. On the 18th June, 1803, General Wellesley wrote to Major Kirkpatrick:—

"I understand that Meer Khan has withdrawn to the northward, and it is probable that he has heard of the disinclination of the Nizam's government to hire all his troops."

Although the Nizam did not employ Amir Khan, it is more than probable that he, though in the service of Holkar, was in the pay of the Britishers, and that in the event of Holkar's joining the confederacy of Scindhia and the Raja of Berar, he

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would have deserted his master and gone over to the English. It would seem that, from this time, Amir Khan served the interests of the latter so well, that in 1818, he was given the principality of Tonk.

However, Holkar did not join the Raja of Berar and Scindhia. The English succeeded remarkably well in preventing him from making peace with the other members of the Maratha Confederacy. Had he been a far-seeing statesman he would not have played into the hands of the English.

But the defection of Holkar from the Maratha Confederency was not considered enough by the English to ensure their success in the event of hostilities with Scindhia and the Bhonslay. The Marquess Wellesley instructed the Commander-in-Chief in India, named General Lake, to open a campaign of low intrigues and conspiracies against Scindhia. In the 'Note' attached to his 'most secret and confidential' letter to him, dated 28th June, 1803, the Marquess Wellesley indicated the principal lines on which the intrigues and conspiracies should be carried on. But on second thoughts, the Governor-General discovered that his instructions were not sufficient for the purpose he had in view.

It has been already said before that from the very day of his making up his mind to go to war with Tippu, the Governor-General commenced also intrigues and conspiracies to reduce the power of

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Dowlut Rao Scindhia. Four or five years' campaign of low intrigues and conspiracies seemed to the Marquess Wellesley not to have made any impression on Scindhia's power. So now with great vigor and with all his might and main he set to the nefarious task of playing off all the princes and peoples of India, then known to the foreigners, against Scindhia. In his 'secret' letter dated For William, July 27th, 1803, the Marquess Wellesley mentioned in more details, the princes and chiefs whom the Commander-in-Chief should bribe to undermine Scindhia's authority. From the perusal of this letter it is clear how the Governor-General and in fact all the Englishmen at that time in India, were lacking in all sense of honor and averse to maintaining peace with the independent Maratha states. The imaginary French influence in the Councils of Scindhia served as a pretext to the Governor-General for going to war with Scindhia. At the time, when he wrote this letter to General Lake, negotiations were still proceeding with Scindhia and the Raja of Berar. The demand was made on those princes that they should retreat from the frontier of the Nizam's territories to their own capitals. Had they complied with this demand, the perfidious Governor-General would have still gone to war with them. For, he wrote to General Lake, on the 27th July, 1803, when as said before, negotiations

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were still proceeding with the Maratha confederates, that : —

"In a state of profound peace and even of alliance with Scindhia, the necessity of providing for our own security would justify a formal demand for the removal of a danger, so imminent, from the frontier of our dominions. The refusal of Scindhia to comply with such a demand would afford a just ground of war against that chief; and any true or false plea of inability on the part of Scindhia to control the movements or to reduce the power of this French state, would authorize and require the British government to assume the protection of its own territories, and to remove with its own hand the proximate cause of insecurity and alarm. Your Excellency will therefore be pleased to understand that *the most desirable object in prosecuting hostilities against Scindhia on the North-Western frontier of Hindustan appears to me to be the entire reduction of M. Perron's regular corps.** This

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* In a speech in the House of Commons Sir Philip Francis quoted an opinion on this point passed by Warren Hastings. "Sir," said the great Pro-Consul to him, "the danger you allude to in the progress the Marathas are making in the art of casting cannon, in the use and practice of artillery, and in the discipline of their armies is imaginary. The Marathas can never be formidable to us in the field on the principles of an European army. They are pursuing a scheme in which they can never succeed, and by doing so they detach themselves from their own plan of warfare, on which alone, if they acted wisely, they would place dependence." In the speech on *The State of Affairs in India,* delivered in the House of Commons on

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operation necessarily includes the capture or destruction of all his artillery and military stores and especially of all arms of European construction."

The words put in italics show the so-called object for which the Governor-General was so anxious to go to war with Scindhia. But the English never made this as a ground of their negotiations with any of the Maratha Princes. There was no 'French state' in the dominion of the Raja of Berar. Why did the Governor-General go to war with him, supposing his real object in prosecuting hostilities were to entirely reduce the power of the 'French State' in the dominion of the independent Maratha powers? But the Governor-General's special pleading was merely a

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April 5, 1805 and reproduced in Cobbett's Parliamentary Debates ,Vol. IV., Francis said :—

"It was............urged that the French officers would introduce European tactics among the Maratha troops. This, so far from striking his mind as an evil, was a thing much to be desired, if war was to be kept up with the Maratha states. It was by abandoning their own irregular mode of fighting that they suffered so severely, and were so effectually repulsed. Had they persevered in the irregular warfare common to their country, they would have exhibited an appearance far more formidable, and displayed a resistance far more dreadful. The history of all ages proved the truth of this assertion...............His view of the fighting of the Mahrattas had been well understood by military men. Mr. Hastings.....................was fully of this opinion." (p. 232).

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cloak to cover his unrighteous and unjustifiable designs.

Further on, he wrote to the Commander-in-Chief in India:—

"Reviewing these statements Your Excellency will observe that the most prosperous issue of a war against Scindhia and the Raja of Berar on the North-Western frontier of Hindustan would in my judgment comprize,

"1st. The destruction of the French state now formed on the banks of the Jumna together with all its military resources;

"2nd. The extension of the Company's frontier to the Jumna, with the possession of Agra, Delhi and a sufficient chain of posts on the Western and Southern banks of the Jumna;

"3rd. The possession of the nominal authority of the Moghul;

"4th. The establishment of an efficient system of alliance with all the petty states to the Southward and the Westward of the Jumna from Jaynagar to Bundelcund;

"5th. The annexation of Bundelcund to the Company's dominions."

'Earth-hunger' was the real motive which prompted the Governor-General to go to war with the Maratha Confederates. To reduce and annihilate (if possible) the power of Scindhia he entered into a course of intrigues perhaps unparallelled in the history of any country. He dignified these low intrigues and plots by using the euphemistic expression 'political negotiations.' General Lake, although a

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ruffian, was not so well versed in the execution of these conspiracies and intrigues as the Governor-General's brother, Major-General Wellesley. It was therefore necessary to furnish General Lake with an assistant who was a past master in the art of that policy which forms the cornerstone on which has been raised the structure of British rule in India. The name of the assistant was Mr. Græme Mercer. Although a medical man, he had been employed in diplomatic service as well. He had learnt his art, based on the maxims of Machiavelli, at the feet of some of the most distinguished European diplomatists. On July 22nd, 1803, Mr. Edmonstone, Secretary to Government, wrote to him a 'most secret' letter, in which he was ordered to set a-foot intrigues amongst those who were dependent on Scindhia. The Secretary wrote to him, that,

> "It is understood that those chiefs are very generally averse to the authority of the Mahratta chieftain (*i.e.* Scindhia), and that they would readily embrace any effectual means which might be proposed to them for the purpose of obtaining an emancipation from that authority."

It is no where explained, how the British arrived at the understanding, that the chiefs were averse to the authority of Scindhia.

He was ordered to intrigue with those chiefs, by promising them

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"the undisturbed possession of their hereditary tenures on the condition of their zealous and ready co-operation with the British government, to the extent of their respective means, in expelling the troops of Dowlut Rao Scindhia from that quarter of Hindustan, and preventing any future attempts on the part of that chieftain, or of any other foreign power, to establish an authority in those provinces."

To successfully carry on the campaign of intrigues set a-foot amongst the chiefs dependent on Scindhia, a few qualified military officers were placed under Mr. Mercer's direction and the Collectors of Allahabad, Cawnpore and Etawah were directed to honor his drafts on the Governor-General for such sums of money as he might require for the purposes of the secret service.

At the same time, the Marquess Wellesley set a-foot intrigues with the Moghul Emperor of Delhi. He was not content with the attempts made to alienate the loyalty of the subjects of Scindhia. He wanted to possess the person of the Moghul Emperor. It will be remembered that Warren Hastings had betrayed the Emperor into the hands of the Maratha chieftain, Madhoji Scindhia. The Emperor was dependent on Scindhia and he never made any complaint to any body regarding the treatment he was receiving at the hands of the Marathas. To all appearances, he was well treated and well taken care of by Scindhia. Yet the Governor-General commenced his intrigues with him by raising false hopes;

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in his breast. He addressed a letter to the Emperor which he forwarded to General Lake with a request to despatch it "with every practicable degree of secrecy and caution." The letter reproduced in the footnote* exhibits cant and hypocrisy, of which the Governor-General was a past-master. There is no

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* Lord Wellesley wrote to the Delhi sovereign :—

"Your Majesty is fully apprized of the sentiments of respect and attachment which the British Government has invariably entertained towards your royal person and family.

"The injuries and indignities to which your Majesty and your illustrious family have been exposed since the time when your Majesty unhappily transferred the protection of your person to the power of the Mahratta state, have been a subject of unceasing concern to the Honourable Company and to the British administration in India; and I have deeply regretted that the circumstances of the times have hitherto precluded the inter-position of the British power for the purpose of affording to your Majesty effectual relief from the oppressive control of injustice, rapacity and inhumanity.

"In the present crisis of affairs, it is probable that your Majesty may have the opportunity of again placing yourself under the protection of the British Government, and I shall avail myself with cordial satisfaction of any event which may enable me to obey the dictates of my sincere respect and attachment to your royal house.

"If your Majesty should be disposed to accept the asylum, which, in the contemplation of such an event, I have directed his Excellency the Commander-in-Chief of the

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need to expose the lies and falsehood with which it abounds, because these are so palpable and transparent.

General Lake was instructed to forward this letter to the Emperor through a trustworthy man. The Governor-General wrote to the Commander-in-Chief in India on the 27th July, 1803:—

"It will be proper that my letter to his Majesty should be despatched with every practicable degree of secrecy and caution. I have reason to believe that Syed Rezza Khan, who has long resided at Delhi, in the capacity of agent on the part of the Resident, with Dowlut Rao Scindhia, at the court of his Majesty, may safely be trusted on this occasion. If upon enquiry your Excellency should find no cause to dissent from this opinion, your Excellency will be pleased to render Syed Rezza Khan the channel for the transmission of the letter, *under such instructions as may appear to your Excellency to be applicable to the occasion.*

British forces in Oude to offer to your Majesty, in the name of the British Government, your Majesty may be assured that every demonstration of respect and every degree of attention which can contribute to the ease and comfort of your Majesty and the royal family, will be manifested on the part of the British Government, and that adequate provision will be made for the support of your Majesty and of your family and household.

"At a proper season his Excellency the Commander-in-Chief will have the honour of communicating to your Majesty my further sentiments on the subject of the proposed arrangement."

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In this event your Excellency will deem it expedient to direct that agent to transmit to your Excellency accurate and regular information of every transaction at Delhi which may come to his knowledge.

"The arrangement to be finally concluded with his Majesty, involves a question of great political and national importance, which will form the subject of future deliberation. * * * * I entertain no doubt that his Majesty will be cordially disposed to place himself under the British protection without any previous stipulation."

A few words in the above extract have been put in *italics*, the importance of which will be presently noticed. Neither in his letter to the Emperor Sháh Alum nor in that to General Lake, the Marquess Wellesley specified the advantages that would accrue to the Moghul Emperor by his intriguing with the English. Nevertheless, false hopes were raised in the breast of the Emperor. It was quite reasonable for him to hope, as it was within the range of probability, from the letter of the Governor-General, that he would be again placed at the head of the Empire of India ; that the authority wrested from him by the Marathas would be restored to him by the English. Such must have been the hopes and expectations of this old Emperor. It also seems probable that the Commander-in-Chief being authorized by the Governor-General to give such instructions to Syed Rezza Khan as would be applicable to the occasion, in order to succeed in his intrigues with the

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Emperor, must have instructed his agent to feed the mind of Sháh Alum with smooth and specious promises which he knew would never be fulfilled. When Tippoo was killed, a part of the Mysore Dominion was restored to the Raja of Mysore. That was the act of the Marquess Wellesley and it was done as said before in compensation for the manner in which the family of the Rajá had betrayed Tippoo by their being drawn into intrigues with the British. The Emperor of Delhi was in the same position at the hands of Scindhia in which Tippoo and his father had placed the Rajá of Mysore. The Marquess Wellesley was now intriguing with him just in the same manner to betray Scindhia, as he had done with the family of the Rajá of Mysore to betray Tippoo. From the words italicised in the above extract, there is every reason to believe that the Moghul Emperor had been given to understand that at least a part of the Indian Empire would be restored to him. It was in this way that he appears to have been lured into the snares of the British and exchanged King Stork for King Log. It should not be forgotten that the Emperor and his successors felt themselves aggrieved at the treatment they received at the hands of the British. It was to represent their grievances that the descendant of the Delhi Emperor, Shah Alum, deputed the great Raja Ram Mohan Roy to England.

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Four decades afterwards, on 18th December, 1848, the treaty entered into with the Emperor of Delhi was the subject of discussion at the East India House, under the chairmanship of Mr. J. Shepherd. That well-known orator, Mr. George Thompson, in pleading the cause of the Emperor referred to the claims which the illustrious Delhi "family had upon the justice and gratitude of the East India Company . . . . . All he asked for at the hands of the Court was good faith, a scrupulous observance of treaties, and the fulfilment of those engagements into which the Company or their servants in India had voluntarily entered."

Mr. Thompson "then detailed the occurrences which led the King of Delhi to place himself under the protection of the British and read the terms of the (alleged) treaty with Lord Lake, of 1803."

Mr. Thompson after referring to the letter of Lord Wellesley to the Delhi Emperor, extracts from which have already been given above, said :—

"His Majesty, in a letter of the 5th October, 1803, addressed to Lord Wellesley, after congratulating him on the success of Lord Lake, claimed the fulfilment of the pledge contained in his lordship's letter; and on the 2nd of Decemebr, 1803, an *ikrar-namah,* or written agreement, was submitted by Lord Lake to the King."

Said the Chairman that

"The court would be surprised to hear that the docu-

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ment, which the hon. proprietor (Mr. Thompson) had called an *ikrar namah* was nowhere to be found on the records of the court, or in those of the Supreme Government of India; and there could be no doubt that no such document had ever been finally recognized, for the Marquess Wellesley had especially directed, in his despatch of the 23rd May, 1805, that no written agreement should be entered into with the King of Delhi,............He (the Chairman) would admit that some memorandum on the subject might have been made by one party, but he denied that it could be considered as a treaty, or ought to be so considered."

On hearing this astounding statement of the Chairman, Mr. Sullivan rose and said:—

"Having listened with attention to the answer (the best defence he supposed that could be made), he declared, that if he was upon his oath at this moment, as a juryman, as an arbitrator, or as a judge in equity, he would cast the Company in full damages; that is, he would sentence them to pay the whole proceeds of the assigned lands with the arrears, nay, he would go further; he would insist upon their making compensation for the lands which had been —he must not say, fraudulently, but—improperly alienated from the Mogul. What was the Chairman's answer to the hon. proprietor's (Mr. Thompson's) case? He says, that the *ikrar namah* or agreement, given by Lord Lake to Shah Alum, is not upon the Company's records; that they have no knowledge of it. What is that to the purpose? The question was, is such a document in existence? Did Lord Lake, the representative of the Governor-General, and armed with plenary power from him, give such a document to the Emperor? If the present Emperor can produce this agreement, and prove that it was so given to his grandfather,

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what will the chairman say? Was it the fault of Shah Alum that this document was not upon record? .... In my judgment, a gross breach of faith has been committed in this case of the Moghul,.............." (*Asiatic Journal*, January 1845, pp. 305-310).

It is evident, then, that the Delhi Emperor was deceived by Wellesley and his vile instrument, Lake, by specious promises and thus made to part with his ancestral rights and privileges.

General Lake was also instructed to intrigue with Begum Sumroo, who had carved out a principality for herself at Sardhana.*

In his 'official and secret' letter, dated 28th July, 1803, to Lieut.-General Lake, the Marquess Wellesley wrote:—

"Your Excellency will be apprized by the 26th paragraph of my instructions to Mr. Mercer, of the arrangement which I propose to conclude with respect to the Jageer of Zeeboo Nissa Begum, commonly called Sumroo's Begum. The disposition of the Begum to place herself under the protection of the British Government is distinctly declared in two letters which I have lately received from her.

"I have stated in my instructions to Mr. Mercer that the local situation of the Begum's Jageer renders it desirable that in any engagement concluded with her on the part of the British Government, such conditions should be inserted as may facilitate the introduction of the British regulations

* An account of this remarkable woman will be found in Compton's Military Adventurers of Hindustan.

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into the Jageer and I request that your Excellency's negotiations with the Begum may be directed to the accomplishment of this object. * * * *

"As an immediate proof of her disposition to connect her interests with those of the British Government, and as the condition of her being admitted to the benefits of its protection, she should be required to recall her battalions now serving in the army of Dowlut Rao Scindhia, and to employ whatever influence she may possess over the zemindars and chieftains in the Dooab, to induce them to place themselves under the authority of the British Government and to employ their resources in assisting the operations of the British arms."

It is impossible to properly unravel the thread of intrigues which the Governor-General wove with all the feudatories and subjects of Scindhia. In his 'secret' letter to General Lake, dated 30th July, 1803, the Marquess Wellesley wrote:—

"It is possible that some of the tributaries, principal officers, or other subjects of Dowlut Rao Scindhia exclusively of those described in my general instructions to your Excellency, and in my instructions to Mr. Mercer, may be inclined to place themselves under the protection of the Company. The war in which we are involved by the aggression* of Scindhia, renders it both just and expedient, that we should avail ourselves as much as possible, of the discontents and disaffection of his subjects or officers, and

* Where, and what was the nature of the aggression of Scindhia? This existed only in the imagination of the Governor-General. What lies this nobleman could indulge in, when it suited his purpose to do so!

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I accordingly desire, that in all cases where overtures of this nature may be made to your Excellency, which may not admit of reference to me, you will be pleased to decide on the degree and nature of the encouragement, proper to be given to the persons by whom they may be made.

"I also authorize your Excellency to give to all tributaries or others renouncing their allegiance to Scindhia, and acting sincerely in our favor, the most positive assurances of effectual protection in the name of the Company. * * * *

"Your Excellency will observe from my general instructions, that it is my ultimate intention to extend the regulations of the British Government throughout the whole of the country, bounded by the rivers Ganges and Jumna, and by the mountains of Kumaon. A part of this territory is possessed by a race of inhabitants known by the designation of Goojurs, who are understood to be adverse to the authority of Dowlut Rao Scindhia and to have frequently been engaged in hostilities with that chieftain in the vicinity of Saharunpore.

"Your Excellency's prudence will dictate the expediency of employing the most efficacious measures for the purpose of conciliating the Goojurs, and of inducing them to unite with the British Government for the overthrow of Scindhia's power in the Dooab. An amicable arrangement may hereafter be concluded with the Goojurs, for the regulation of the conditions on which their possessions shall be held subject to the paramount authority of the Honorable Company."

It should be remembered that at the time when the English, and especially their Governor-General, were busily engaged in intrigues against Scindhia, war had not been formally declared upon that

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Prince. The English and the Maratha Confederates were still supposed to be at peace with one another. Negotiations with the ostensible desire for peace were still being carried on between them. The proof of the genuineness of Scindhia's and the Raja of Berar's desire for peace is to be found in the dogged perseverance with which they clung to every chance of bringing the negotiations to a satisfactory issue and in order to ward off a war. But as has been already pointed out before, the English and especially General Wellesley who had been empowered to conclude peace or war with the Marathas would never put down in black and white the concessions which would satisfy them. They always confined themselves to vague generalities and never mentioned the minimum of what they would accept. The British tried to make out the Marathas as the delinquent party. No evidence has ever been brought forward to show that the Marathas were not desirous for peace. In the published despatches of the Marquess Wellesley, the only documents on which the sincerity and good faith of Dowlut Rao Scindhia could be impugned are the letter of Mr. Leycester and its two enclosures. Referring to these documents, Mr. Montgomery Martin, the editor of the Despatches of the Marquess Wellesley, writes that

"They fully prove his Lordship's declaration to General

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Lake, that Scindhia's sole object was to gain time, and also the opinion of Colonel Collins."*

Mr. Leycester's letter, dated 26th July and its enclosures, to which reference will shortly be made, were not received by the Governor-General until the 15th of August, 1803, that is a few days after hostilities had been actually undertaken against Scindhia. In his letter to the Governor-General, Mr. Leycester wrote :—

"In the present posture of affairs, I trust a zeal for the public welfare, and the anxiety I feel to render my small services of any the least benefit to a government from which I have received such distinguished countenance, will plead in palliation of the liberty I am taking in the present address and that if the intrusion be altogether unacceptable or unnecessary, the motive to it will screen me from the disapprobation of your Lordship."

After this prelude, he goes on to describe how certain letters alleged to have been written by Scindhia had been forwarded to him by one Bamboo Khan. These letters were, it was alleged, addressed to Gholam Mohammed Khan and Bamboo Khan. It was a noteworthy fact that Scindhia's letters in original were not forwarded but copies of these only. There are strong grounds for suspecting

* The Despatches of the Marquess Wellesley, Vol. III, page 203.

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that 'a zeal for the public welfare' prompted the Collector of Moradabad to encourage dependants of Scindhia not only to betray their master, but fabricate and forge documents to compromise him Gholam Mohamed Khan was a Rohilla chieftain, who had usurped the Government of Rampore and revolted against the Nawab Vizier of Oude, but he was defeated by the British troops in 1794, and expelled from Rampore.

Bamboo Khan was not a man of much importance. He was an adventurer who was trying to better his circumstances by fawning on and flattering the powers that were.* It passes our under-

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* Bamboo Khan bore a grudge against Dowlut Rao Scindhia, for the half-caste officer named John Baptiste Filose, in the employ of that Mahratta prince, had, in the name of his master, defeated and deprived him of all his possessions in the Saharunpore District. Regarding this incident, Sir Michael Filose wrote in the *Asiatic Quarterly Review* for April, 1889 :—

"He (John Baptiste Filose) was now a little over twelve years of age, * * * one day, when La Fontaine with the officers under him presented themselves in Durbar, he was ordered by the Emperor to send part of his force against Bamboo Khan, the contumacious Nawab of Saharunpore. Thereupon young Filose said that, if it were not considered presumption on his part, he would offer to lead the expedition, and thus show his capacity. * * * *

"At first La Fontaine was unwilling to entrust the boy with such service. But after reflecting for sometime on his

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standing that Scindhia should have addressed a man of so little consequence the letter, a copy of which was forwarded to Mr. Leycester. Another question arises how Bamboo Khan came to possess the letter alleged to have been written by Scindhia to Ghoolam Mahomed Khan. It is also probable that the British Government of that day in India suspected the genuineness of these letters. These letters bore no date. In the official records, their translation appears under the heading:—

"Translation of a paper *stated* to be the copy of a letter from Dowlut Rao Scindhia to Ghoolam Mahomed Khan."*

It was a noteworthy fact that Bamboo Khan did not forward the letter in original which was alleged he had received from Scindhia, and further alleged to have been the same as the one to Ghoolam

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ability and high promise, he took off his sword and gave it to John Baptiste, saying, "Take this, my son, as your commission, win or die". To render the young Commander's duty the easier, he gave him a strong force consisting of two regiments of infantry, four guns, and a body of cavalry. With these he set out against the Nawab Bamboo Khan. His attack on Saharanpore was so spirited that after two hours' fighting Bamboo Khan and his Afghans, though three times as numerous as Filose's force, fled from the Fort and escaped to the jungle. Filose took possession of the Fort, and ruled there for about two months."

* Wellesley's Despatches, Vol. III. pp. 203-207.

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Mahomed Khan, excepting in parts not applicable to Bamboo Khan's circumstances. Bamboo Khan's letter to Mr. Leycester shows how desirous he was to court the favor of the English in order to improve his circumstances. He had every temptation to commit forgery, for he knew that that would please the British. At that time, the latter had set a-foot a huge conspiracy against Scindhia. Bamboo Khan would not have ventured to approach the English Collector and forwarded to him the letters alleged to have been written by Scindhia, had he not been sounded before and taken into the confidence of the British conspirators.

But, supposing that Scindhia had actually writtten the letters to Gholam Mahomed Khan and Bamboo Khan, copies of which the Collector forwarded to the Governor-General, should he be blamed for so doing? As said before, the letters bear no date. But it is certain, that if genuine, they were written sometime in the middle of June, 1803. We should remember the events which were at that time being witnessed by Scindhia. He saw that the English were armed to the teeth, and that they were making strong attempts to alienate the loyalty of his feudatories and subjects. Many sinister signs were observed by him. The Resident at his Court, Colonel Collins, had deliberately insulted him and

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demanded his discharge. In his memorial, dated 12th June, 1803, to Scindhia, Colonel Collins wrote:

"Should the Maharaja decline giving Colonel Collins the satisfaction which he now demands, in this case the Colonel requests that Maharaja Dowlut Rao Scindhia will furnish him with a party of horse to escort him as far as Aurangabad, together with supplies of grain sufficient for the subsistence of his sepoys and followers, until their arrival at that city."

This language of the Resident left no doubt in the mind of the Maratha Prince that the English having made every preparation for the war, were now desirous for war and not peace. From arguments already adduced before, it has been made evident that Scindhia was extremely solicitious for peace. But when he saw that war was inevitable, why should he be blamed for making the same preparations which the English had been doing for years previously? Of course, he had strong grounds for calling the English of his day in India *"the unprincipled race."*

The Marquess Wellesley wrote a secret letter, dated 22nd August, 1803, to Lieut.-General Lake, at the same time transmitting to him a copy of Mr. Leycester's letter together with copies and translations of the Persian documents, to which the letter referred. The Governor-General wrote:—

"It will be obvious to your Excellency that the public service may be essentially promoted by securing the attach-

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ment and exertions of Bumboo Khan in the present crisis of our affairs. I have therefore addressed a letter to that chieftain, signifying my disposition to accept his services, and to extend to him in return for his exertions, the protection and favor of the British Government. That letter accompanies this despatch, together with copies of it, for your Excellency's information.

* * * *

"I deem it to be proper, however, to suggest to your Excellency's consideration the expediency of encouraging Bumboo Khan to apprehend and to deliver the person of Gholam Mohamud Khan into the hands of the British power, or at least to prevent Gholam Mohummed from proceeding with the force which he may have collected either for the purpose of joining the army under General Perron, or of exciting disturbances in the territories of the Company or the Nabob Vizier. If your Excellency should be of opinion that the offer of a pecuniary reward is calculated to stimulate the exertions of Bumboo Khan for the accomplishment of either of those purposes, Your Excellency is at liberty to convey to him the offer of such a reward to any extent which your Excellency may deem proper."

Thus to the list of conspirators against Scindhia was added the name of one more man. What services this conspirator rendered to the English, and in what manner he was rewarded by them, are questions which from the very nature of things are not discussed in public documents.

At that time, the land of the Five Rivers was showing signs of military organisation. The Punjab has always played a most prominent part in the

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history of India. Every invader and foreign conqueror of India had necessarily to pass through the Punjab. Hence, the people had to bear the brunt of the attack of every ambitious foreign invader. They were consequently always a very sturdy race. But at the time of which we are taking note the Sikhs were coming into existence as a martial people in India. At that time, in the person of Raja Ranjit Singh, the Sikhs possessed a leader who was coming into prominence by his distinguished military genius. He was totally illiterate. In this he resembled Hyder Ali more than Shivaji. The founder of the Maratha nation possessed many qualities of head and heart which Ranjit Singh lacked.

However, the Sikhs, at this critical period of Indian history, could have given much trouble to the British. They could have proved a disturbing factor in the political equation of the Governor-General. Ranjit Singh resembled Haidar Ali in being illiterate and also in throwing off the allegiance to his lawful master. Lahore had been brought under the subjugation of the King of Kabul. Ranjit Singh, as the Governor of Lahore, made himself independent of the Kabul Sovereign. Had he been a far-seeing statesman, or had there been any statesman among the Sikhs, the Marathas could have counted upon Ranjit Singh and the Sikhs for support. But unfortunately there never arose any statesman among the Sikhs.

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Haidar Ali, as said before, was not a great statesman. But Ranjit Singh did not even approach Haidar in statecraft.

However, the Marquess Wellesley thought that the Sikhs might give trouble, were they to come to the help of, or join, the Marathas. So he tried to conspire and enter into intrigues with them against Scindhia. In his secret and official letter, dated 2nd August 1803, the Marquess Wellesley wrote to Lieut.-General Lake:—

"Your Excellency has anticipated my opinion with respect to the expediency of endeavouring to obtain the co-operation of the principal chiefs of the tribe of Sikhs, in the approaching contest with the Maratha power.

* * * * * *

"The chiefs from whose influence or exertions the greatest benefit is to be derived, are the Raja of Putteeala, and those petty chieftains who occupy the territory between Putteala and the Jumna. I understand, however, that Raja Runjeet Singh, the Raja of Lahore, is considered to be the principal among the chiefs of the tribe of Sikhs, and to possess considerable influence over the whole body of the Sikh chiefs.

"In the year 1800 the Resident with Dowlut Rao Scindhia, by my direction, despatched a confidential agent to the principal chiefs, for the purpose of persuading them to unite in opposing the apprehended invasion of Zemaun Shah and of conciliating them to the interests of the British Government.

"Those chieftains manifested a disposition highly favorable to the British Government, until the receipt of

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letters from M. Perron, who succeeded in exciting their suspicions by false and malignant statements of the views and intentions of the British Government with respect to the Sikhs; * * * Since that period of time M. Perron has industriously cultivated the attachment of the Sikh Chieftains, and has probably continued his endeavours to preserve in their minds the spirit of jealousy and mistrust which he had excited against the British Government.

* * * * * *

"I transmit to Your Excellency, for the purpose of being forwarded, at such time and in such manner as may appear to your Excellency to be most proper, letters to those among the Sikh chiefs with whom the agent of the Resident with Dowlut Rao Scindhia communicated.

* * * * *

"Adverting to the great distance of Lahore from the scene of intended operations, the only support to be expected from Raja Ranjit Singh, is the exertion of his influence with the other Sikh chieftains, to induce them to favor the cause of the British Government.

* * * * *

"Such of those chieftains as are subject to the control and exactions of the Maratha power, may perhaps be detached from the interests of that nation by promises of protection from the British Government, and of exemption from the payment of tribute in future.

* * * * *

"If it should appear impracticable to obtain the co-operation of those chieftains, it would still be an object of importance to secure their neutrality.

"In your communications to the Sikh chieftains it may be proper that Your Excellency should suggest to their consideration the danger to which they will hereafter be

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exposed by any opposition to the interests of the British Government, and the advantages which they may derive from a connection with so powerful a state.

* * * * *

"It is possible that, however well disposed those chieftains may be towards the British Government, they may be deterred from openly manifesting that disposition, by their apprehension of M. Perron's resentment, until the operations of the British troops shall relieve them from that danger, and a premature disclosure of our intentions with respect to the Sikh Chieftains may enable M. Perron to frustrate the object of these instructions. This consideration may require the observance of secrecy and caution in your Excellency's communications with those chieftains."

The letter from which so many extracts have been given above, is of great historical importance, as it throws a flood of light on the rise and progress of Ranjit Singh and the Sikh Power in the Panjab and serves to explain, what appears to many, the pusilaminous conduct of Ranjit Singh towards the British. Towards the end of the eighteenth, and the beginning of the nineteenth century, the Sikh power had not come into existence. But there were individual leaders with bands of Sikhs who spread terror and confusion by their plundering and marauding excursions. The author of the *Seir-ul-Mutakhrin* has given a very graphic account of the Sikhs of his times. He writes :—

"The Sikhs formed a large body, who, from a frater-

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nity of mendicants, had in his (Bahadur-Shah's) time become a formidable army, which plundered and desolated the whole province of Lahore.

* * * * * *

"They (the Sikhs) spared no Mussalman, whether man, woman, or child; pregnant women were ripped open, and their children dashed against their faces or against walls. The Emperor Bahadur Shah shuddered at hearing of such atrocious deeds; * * * * * On the accession of Ferokh-Siar, Islam-Khan, Viceroy of Lahore, received orders to destroy those free-booters; but he was totally defeated in a pitched battle, and after losing the greatest part of his men, he retired to Lahore covered with disgrace. Benda, elevated by so unexpected a success, recommenced his atrocities with additional fury. (Brigg's Translation, p. 90).

Of course, we should not lose sight of the fact that the author of the *Seir-ul-Mutakhrin* was a Mahomedan and as such was biassed against the Sikhs, since on his co-religionists the Sikhs retaliated for the persecutions they had been subjected to at their hands. Vengeance sleeps long, but it never dies. The followers of the Crescent, under the supremacy of the weak or degenerate Moghul Emperors, had badly persecuted the Sikhs. The latter were watching for opportunities to avenge on the Mahomedans the ill-treatment they had received at their hands. The Sikhs at the time when the Marquess Wellesley landed in India as Governor-General, were not reckoned as of any political importance. They were merely bands of marauders, robbers and free-booters.

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That soldier of fortune, George Thomas, who knew the Sikhs perfectly well, made in 1801 overtures to the Marquess Wellesley to conquer the Sikhs. The biographer of George Thomas writes, that—Thomas

"announced his intention of declaring war against the Sikhs, who were, he observed, equally the enemies of the Marathas and the English. To enable him to attack them with confidence he desired an assurance of neutrality from General Perron, under guarantee from the Governor-General. In return for this Thomas offered to advance and take possession of the Punjab and give up his army to the direction and control of the English; to take the country, and, in short, to become an active partisan in their cause. By this plan, he explained, 'I have nothing in view but the welfare of my King and country; it is not to better myself that I have thought of it, but I should be sorry to see my conquests fall to the Marathas, for I wish to give them to my King, and to serve him the remainder of my day. This I can only do as a soldier in this part of the world.'" (Compton's *European Military Adventurers of Hindustan,* pp. 173-174).

But at that time the Marquess Wellesley was not in a position to countenance George Thomas's proposal and bring the Sikhs under the rule of the East India Company. The biographer of George Thomas writes:—

"Political considerations made it quite impossible for the Marquis Wellesley to entertain these proposals. They were advanced at a time when he had his hand fully occupied with the expedition to Egypt and the unsettled state

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of affairs in the Deccan, where signs of trouble were looming which would require all the resources of the English power to successfully oppose. In consequence of this Thomas's design of an invasion of the Panjab was never carried out in its entirety but was confined to the short but brilliant campaign, which he undertook in the year 1801." (*Ibid*, p. 174).

Colonel James Tod, the author of the Annals of Rajasthan, writing of George Thomas's character in the pages of the Asiatic Journal, said:—

"The Sikhs quailed before the name of Thomas, who spoke of them as soldiers with contempt, and treated them to hard knocks. With 500 of his Rohilla cavalry he would at any time have disposed of thrice that number of Sikh horse." (*Ibid*, p. 216).

But it cannot be denied that the Sikhs were a brave and war-like people; had they thrown in their lot with the Marathas, they could have given much trouble to the British. We must give great credit to the Marquess Wellesley for his taking note of this fact and therefore he set a-foot intrigues and conspiracies with them against the Marathas. The rise of the Sikhs (and of Ranjit Singh in particular) was due to the encouragement they received at the hands of the English. While the latter were extirpating all the independent states of India, and reducing them to non-entities, they and their chief, the Marquess Wellesley, instead of acting on the advice of George Thomas, and instead of extending the provisions of

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his nefarious scheme of subsidiary alliance to the petty Sikh states and over the petty Sikh chieftains, considered it a matter of political expediency to encourage the Sikhs and raise them into a Power. Without the help of the English, the rise of the Sikhs and of Ranjit Singh would have been impossible. Those who consider the conduct of Ranjit Singh as pusillanimous for his never crossing swords with the British, or rather yielding to, and carrying out their demands, are not aware of the fact that his rise would have been impossible without their help and encouragement. It was out of a sense of gratitude, which forms such a marked trait in the character of all Asiatic nations, that Ranjit always yielded to their demands, and carried out their wishes.

So by the bait held out to the Sikhs it was not difficult for the British to ensnare them and secure their neutrality, if not co-operation.

But the neutrality or co-operation of the Sikhs would not have affected Scindhia's interests so much as the success which attended the intrigues and conspiracies of the English with Scindhia's officers and men. It has been already mentioned before that acting on the advice of Warren Hastings, Madhoji Scindhia had entertained the services of European officers, mostly of the French nationality, to train his men in the European system of warfare. This was

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a most suicidal policy to be adopted by any Indian Power. Madhoji's successor was now to pay the penalty for his folly.

It will be remembered that at the Cape of Good Hope, when the Marquess Wellesley (at that time Earl of Mornington) had an opportunity of discussing the political affairs of India with Major Kirkpatrick (the late Resident at the Court of Hyderabad), the latter among other questions asked :—

> "What measures now appear to you to be the best adapted to the object of inducing the Nizam to disband this (French) corps!"

Major Kirkpatrick suggested four modes of proceeding ; one of these was :—

> "By holding out suitable inducements to the European and principal native officers, as well as to the European Sergeants of the corps to quit it, and retire into the Company's dominions : a measure which, if tolerably successful, would necessarily either bring about the entire dissolution of it, or at least, reduce it to a state of comparative insignificance."

The Governor-General now acted on this suggestion as regards the European military adventurers in the service of Scindhia. M. Perron, a Frenchman of very low origin, had succeeded De Boigne as Commander-in-Chief of Scindhia's troops. It should be remembered that these Europeans were mere

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mercenaries. Gold was their god. They were not inspired by patriotism or any sense of honor in serving a non-Christian prince. The sole object with these mercenaries was to amass fortunes as quickly and as easily as possible. So it was not difficult to buy them over. The Marquess Wellesley issued a proclamation holding out pecuniary rewards to all the European mercenaries to desert the service of Scindhia. And he succeeded beyond his expectations. All the adventurers without the least scruple of conscience, if they ever possessed any, deserted the prince whose salt they had eaten for so many years and to whom they had plighted their faith to loyally serve. But the sight, or rather the promise of gold, made them abjure their faith.

It would have been proper for Scindhia when he saw that the war was inevitable, to take steps to prevent the foreign mercenaries in his employ from deserting him, or, failing in that, to shoot or hang them. Every received principle of the law of nations sanctions this mode of procedure. But we should remember that Scindhia was an Asiatic and a Hindoo. He could not conceive how the Christians in his service, who had been so well treated and honored, would desert him in his hour of need. He was not sufficiently well acquainted with the character of these foreigners. Even if he was, he did not like to stain his hands with their blood. "Judgment

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belongeth to Lord God" and he left Him to deal with the traitors in his camp. Unfortunately for him, he was not versed in the school of politics prevailing in all European countries since the days of Machiavelli.

This desertion of the foreign mercenaries was most fatal to Scindhia.

We have now tried to disentangle the web of conspiracies and intrigues which the Governor-General wove round Scindhia. We have solely depended for our information on the records of the English themselves. These show to what lengths the English of that period could go in their campaign of intrigues and conspiracies. No historian has as yet fully traced the ramifications of these conspiracies.

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CHAPTER XXVI.

THE COMMENCEMENT AND PROGRESS OF THE WAR.

THE BATTLE OF ASSAYE.

The Marquess Wellesley had delegated the power of negotiating for peace with, or levying war against the Maratha Confederates to his brother Major-General Wellesley. The Commander-in-Chief, General Lake, was employed in the task of setting a-foot intrigues, conspiracies and plots against Scindhia in northern India. But in the event of the declaration of war by General Wellesley, the Commander-in-Chief was also to prosecute hostilities with vigor and energy. It was on the 6th August, 1803, that General Wellesley at last declared war on the Maratha Confederates. In those days, railways and telegraphs had not come into existence. So it took several days before the Governor-General or the Commander-in-Chief knew anything of the doings of General Wellesley in the south.

General Wellesley had already set out from Poona and was within two days' march of Ahmednagar. Ahmednagar possessed a very strong fortress built by the Nizam-Shahi rulers. It was not an easy

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thing to capture this fortress by assault. It could have stood a siege for an indefinite length of time. The possession of Ahmednagar was rightly considered to be of great importance, since this would have the effect of demoralizing Scindhia's subjects. Lord Wellesley was intriguing and conspiring with Scindhia's men in charge of the Ahmednagar Fort or City. On the 7th August, General Wellesley marched to and encamped near the vicinity of Ahmednagar, when he issued the following proclamation:—

"Dowlut Rao Scindhia and the Raja of Berar having threatened with hostilities the British Government and their allies,* Rao Pundit Purdhaun and the Nabob, Nizam Ali, and in pursuance of those threats, having advanced with their large armies to a position contiguous to the frontiers, and having refused to depart from it, notwithstanding the repeated representations and entreaties of Major-General Wellesley, as the only mode of preserving peace, he at last finds himself obliged to commence hostilities against those chiefs.

"He does not, however, intend to war upon the inhabitants; and, accordingly, all amildars and others are required to remain quietly in their stations, and obey the orders they will receive; and if they do no injury to the British Armies, none will be done to them. But notice is hereby given, that if any of the inhabitants of the country either

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* It is not stated, when and in what manner, these chiefs had threatened with hostilities, the British Government and their allies. This was a fabrication of the English.

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abandon their dwellings or do any injury to the British Armies or their followers, they will be treated as enemies, and suffer accordingly."

This proclamation produced the desired effect. The English were not coming as conquerors but as friends. At least so they pretended to be. Moreover, the subjects of Scindhia were not prepared to offer resistance, since their master never received any ultimatum from the British, with whom he was sincerely desirous of maintaining peace.

On the 8th, General Wellesley encamped at Ahmednagar. He summoned the Killedar or the keeper of the Fort to surrender. He made a very feeble resistance. There was some desultory fighting for two or three days. On the 11th August, 1803, the Killedar surrendered the fort, "on condition that he should be allowed to depart with his garrison, and that he should have his private property." General Wellesley consented to this proposal and the Killedar handed over the fort with the guardianship of which he had been entrusted.*

In his dispatches, General Wellesley wrote that "the fort was then in excellent repair." But it was not convenient for him to mention by what foul

* The letter of General Wellesley to the Governor-General, dated Ahmednagar, 12th August, 1803, shows also the advantages of holding the Ahmednagar Fort.

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means he came to possess it. The following extract from the Ahmednagar Gazetteer, edited by Sir James Campbell, needs no comment:—

"When after capturing the town General Wellesley reconnoitred the fort on the 9th August the complete protection which the glacis afforded to the wall made it difficult to fix on a spot for bombardment. Raghurao Baba, the Deshmukh of Bhingar, received a bribe of £400 (Rs. 4000) and advised an attack on the east face." (p. 695).

On the 13th, he issued the following proclamation, which as usual abounded with lies:—

"Dowlut Rao Scindhia and the Raja of Berar having manifested an intention of attacking the British Government and its allies, ... Major-General Wellesley, as a measure of defence, has attacked the fort of Ahmednagar, and his brave troops have got possession of it.

"He has appointed Captain Graham to take charge . . . . . of all the territories belonging to Dowlut Rao Scindhia, depending upon that fort, and he calls upon all amildars and others to attend to and obey his orders, and those of no other persons at their peril. Captain Graham will be at Ahmednagar."

He stayed in Ahmednagar for some days to settle the place and bring its inhabitants under the spell of English influence.

At this stage it will be necessary to take note of the several divisions of the troops under the leadership of British officers.

In the south, under the command of General

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Wellesley, there was a very large force, with which he marched on to Ahmednagar. Colonel Stevenson had also a large army and was now encamping in the vicinity of Aurangabad. The whole of the Nizam's subsidiary force, augmented also by his own troops, had been placed under the command of Colonel Stevenson.

But the Commander-in-Chief of Madras was in the field with a very large army under his command. Lieut.-General Stuart was on the frontier of Mysore, ordered to watch the course of events and render such assistance to Major-General Wellesley as the latter might stand in need of. But the real and secret object of his presence with the large army on the frontier of Mysore was:—

"for the purposes of covering the frontier, and ensuring the internal tranquility of Mysore and the ceded districts, *of overawing the Southern Maratha jaghiredars*, of supporting the British interests at Hyderabad, and affording every practicable degree of security to the communication with Major-General Wellesley's army."

These are the words of the Lieut.-General Stuart himself, quoted from his despatch to the Governor-General, dated 8th August, 1803. The words put in italics require a passing reference. At the time of the restoration of the Peishwa it was given out by the British that the southern Maratha Jaghirdars were particularly anxious to co-operate with them in

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effecting the restoration of the Peishwa. Had such been the case, why was it found necessary to 'overawe' them with the presence of a large army on their frontier?

Scindhia possessed some territories in Guzerat, dependent on the fort of Baroach. General Wellesley entrusted the Resident with the Guicowar to commence operations in Guzerat against Scindhia's possessions by the siege of Baroach.

The Raja of Berar was master of a very large tract of country on the eastern coast of India, known as the province of Cuttack. This province was to be usurped by the British. How this was to be effected by means of plots and intrigues against the Raja of Berar was pointed out to Lieut.-Colonel Campbell by the Marquess Wellesley, in his letter dated August 3rd, 1803. Lieut.-Colonel Campbell was commanding the Northern Division of the Madras Army at Ganjam. The Governor-General wrote to him:—

"You have been informed that a force will be detached from Bengal to act under your command, together with the force which you may be enabled to collect from the Northern Circars, in consequence of the orders signified to you by my Military Secretary. The force from Bengal will embark in the course of a day or two, and I have directed return of it to accompany these instructions."

Then follow several paragraphs containing instructions as to the manner in which Lieut.-Colonel

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Campbell should enter into intrigues with the feudatories and subjects of the Raja of Berar.

Thus the number of armies which the English brought into the field to operate against Scindhia and the Raja of Berar amounted to six, *viz.*, the one on the Mysore Frontier under Lieut.-General Stuart, that under Major-General Wellesley, the Nizam's troops under Colonel Stevenson, the main army of northern India under Lieut.-General Lake; the troops in the northern division of the Madras Presidency under Lieut.-Colonel Campbell, and, lastly, the force employed in Guzerat to reduce Baroach and capture other possessions of Scindhia in that country.

But it was Major-General Wellesley and Lieut.-General Lake who had to fight almost all the principal battles with which this Second Maratha War is associated.

It has been stated above that General Wellesley encamped at Ahmednagar for a few days after its fall. He had taken possession of the country dependent on the Ahmednagar Fort in the name of the Company and the Peishwa. The Peishwa was naturally anxious that his men should be appointed to manage the affairs of the conquered territory. But such was not the intention of General Wellesley. He wanted to keep the Peishwa quiet with smooth and specious, although false, promises; because he did not wish that the Peishwa should have any share in the terri-

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tories, which would be wrested from Scindhia and the Raja of Berar. On the 13th August, 1803, he wrote to Colonel close, Resident at Poona:—

"I am very anxious that the Peishwa should feel no jealousy about this place. I have, however, taken possession of it in the names of the Company and the Peishwa, and I shall take possession of the country in the same manner. I intend to appoint Captain Graham to manage the latter. I wish that you would speak to Ragonath Rao (*i.e.* the Peishwa Baji Rao, son of Ragonath Rao) upon this subject, point out to him how necessary the place is for us, and that the country should be kept quiet by means of the management of a gentleman in the Company's Service. You may also assure him that a faithful account shall be kept of the revenues, and credit given to the Peishwa for his proportion of them."

But on the following day, the General changed his mind. On the 14th August, 1803, he wrote to Colonel Close:—

"Since writing to you yesterday, it has occurred to me that it would be better not to hold out to the Peishwa any promise or prospect of having half the revenue of Ahmednagar, but to tell him generally that the revenues shall be applied to pay the expenses of the war, and that the accounts of them shall be communicated to him. One great object, however, is to reconcile his mind to our keeping possession of the country, which is absolutely necessary for our communications with Poona; and provided that is effected, I think it immaterial whether he has half the revenues or not.

* * *

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"I beg you to turn this subject over in your mind, and to act in conformity to the sentiments I have above expressed. I will delay to write you a public letter upon it till I shall receive your answer."

The perfidious General was going to deceive the Peishwa in the same manner as his predecessors had treated "Omichand." The British were afraid that the Peishwa and the Southern Maratha jagiredars might seize the opportunity and declare hostilities against them. Hence their solicitude and trouble to keep them quiet with smooth and false promises. On the 17th August, 1803, General Wellesley wrote to Lieut.-Colonel Close:—

"If Ragonath Rao (*sic* the Peishwa Baji Rao) should be satisfied with a general assurance that the conquered territory is to be applied to the benefit of the allies, it will be most convenient, as that assurance leaves the question open for future discussion, and for a decision* according to the circumstances of the war.

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* Yes, after the war, the same Christian General expressed his opinion, that the Peishwa should have no share in the conquered territory.

In his letter dated 11th November, 1803, General Wellesley wrote to the Governor-General: "As well as I can recollect the treaty of Bassein, the Peishwa has no claim to participate in conquests; and if he had under the treaty, his breach of all its stipulations would free your Excellency from the necessity of giving him anything. However, your Excellency may deem it proper that he should enjoy some of

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"But I consider it to be an object of the utmost importance that the Peishwa's mind should be satisfied as far as possible, in order that there may appear no wavering in his intention to adhere to the alliance on which the Southern jaghiredars might found acts of hostility against the Company."

From the despatches of General Wellesley it would seem that the Peishwa had been chafing under the chain riveted round his neck by the British, and it was thought possible that he might leave Poona or declare hostilities against them. It was therefore found necessary to keep the Peishwa quiet by means of smooth although false promises. Writing to Major Shawe on the 24th August, 1803, Major-General Wellesley said:—

"I have no idea that the Peishwa will attempt to fly from Poona; or that if he should be so inclined, he could

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the advantages resulting from the war, and *the cession of his territories in the Surat Attavesy would be full satisfaction for all his claims.* But before this territory should be ceded to his Highness the Peishwa, he ought to be required to consent to the improvements of the defensive alliance which I have above recommended should be required from his Highness the Soubah of the Deccan.

"I am of opinion that the fortress of Ahmednagar ought to be kept in the hands of the British Government until all these arrangements shall have been completed, and your Excellency shall see in what manner the defensive alliances will work."

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carry his plan into execution without the knowledge of his ministers. You will have observed from my letters to Colonel Close, that I have urged him to pay the ministers, in order to have accurate information of what passes."*

"We cannot contrive to settle the Government at Poona till the conclusion of the War. Bad as the situation of the Government is, it must be allowed to continue. If we

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* There is no letter to this effect (previous to this one) among the published Despatches of the Duke of Wellington.

Thus, it is evident that a good deal of roguery practised by the English in bringing about the ruin of the Marathas has been suppressed by them.

But there can be no doubt that the ministers of the Peishwa were tempted with bribes to betray their master. Writing to Lieut.-Colonel Close, Resident at Poona, from Camp at Assye on the 28th September, 1803, General Wellesley said :—"Lord Wellesley has taken up the question of paying the Peishwa's ministers upon a great scale.

* * * * *

"The Peishwa has no ministers. He is everything himself, and everything is little. In my opinion, therefore, we ought to pay those who are supposed to be and are called his ministers, *not to keep the machine of government in motion, in consistence with the objects of the alliance as we do at Hyderabad*, but to have intelligence of what passes in the Peishwa's secret councils in order that we may check him in time when it may be necessary."

From the words put in italics it is clear that the real motive for corrupting the Peishwa's ministers was to create confusion and disorder in his dominions.

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were to attempt to alter it now, we should have a contest in our rear, which would be ruinous."

So then the philanthropical motives of the British, of which they never ceased boasting, in effecting the re-instatement of the Peishwa Baji Rao are quite apparent. They restored him to his *Masnad* in order to create confusion and disorder and entered into intrigues with his ministers by bribing and corrupting them with the sole object of bringing more territories under their power.

Let us now follow the progress of General Wellesley. He remained encamped for several days at Ahmednagar, occupied in making arrangements for the security of the fort, but marched out of Ahmednagar on the 18th and crossed the Godavery on the 24th August with the intention of proceeding to Aurangabad and joining Colonel Stevenson, who was in command of the Nizam's force.

When the Maratha Confederates heard of the treacherous act of the British in capturing the fort of Ahmednagar, they also marched out of their encampment and entered the Nizam's territories. They hurriedly prepared for the war which was now inevitable. They were laboring under many disadvantages. The war was forced on them, and their enemy had been preparing for it since many years past, who had even raised traitors in their camp. Taking all these facts into consideration, it speaks

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very highly of Scindhia's military training that he should have so ably handled his troops that had remained faithful to him. His age at the time of this great crisis was only twenty-three. His foresight of a statesman and his high military skill should evoke our admiration. The fact of his failure does not detract from his merits.

Unfortunately, the movements of the Confederate Maratha chiefs were not kept so secret as those of their adversaries, for the very simple reason that there were spies and traitors in their camp who were in the pay of the British.* Their movements having been known, it was the easiest thing possible for the British to attack them under circumstances not favorable to the Confederates.

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* General Wellesley in his memorandum on the Battle of Assaye wrote :—"We cannot send out natives in the Company's service, who, from long habit, might be able to give an accurate account, because they, being inhabitants of the Carnatic, or Mysore, are as well known in this part of the country as if they were Europeans ; * * * The consequence is, that we are obliged to employ, as hircarrahs (spies), the natives of the country, and to trust to their reports."

These 'natives of the country' were subjects of Scindhia. The British bribed them to betray their master and with their help, traitors were raised in the camp of Scindhia. That the British could bribe 'natives of the country' to betray their own Indian rulers, shows national degeneracy and lack of patriotism.

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The great battle of Assaye, so memorable in the history of India, and which has been described as a 'decisive' one, for it secured the establishment of the supremacy of the British on a sound foundation, was fought on the 23rd September, 1803. It was fought under every circumstance unfavourable to Scindhia. The British chose their own ground of action. Dowlut Rao Scindhia was not present at Assaye on the day of the fight. His object was to march on Hyderabad and with this aim in view he had with his cavalry moved ahead of his infantry and artillery. On the morning of the 23rd, intelligence of the encampment of Scindhia's infantry and artillery at the village of Assaye was brought to General Wellesley. Had Dowlut Rao Scindhia been present with his cavalry and chosen troops at Assaye on that fatal day of 23rd September, it is not improbable that the history of India would have been differently written.

The despatch of General Wellesley, dated Camp at Assaye, 24th September, 1803, to the Governor-General and the Memorandum on the Battle of Assaye, subsequently transmitted, should be consulted by those who are interested in the military aspect of that event.

That Scindhia's men should have fought so bravely as to exact the admiration of their enemy shows of what metal they were made. Under proper

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and loyal leaders they would have been quite invincible. It should be remembered that the officers in command of the corps of Scindhia's infantry and artillery were mostly Europeans. As said previously, they were all perfidious and traitors. Some of them had deserted Scindhia at the time when the Governor-General was making warlike preparations and trying to take the Maratha Confederates unawares. It is to be feared that the other European officers, although in the service of Scindhia, were really in the pay of the British and did not scruple to betray their master. It would be impossible to account for the defeat of Scindhia on any other reasonable ground. General Wellesley's plan of operations, it is admitted on all hands, was not well conceived. That with his badly conceived manouvres and movements, he should have succeeded in inflicting such a crushing defeat on the Maratha Confederates, would remain a mystery unless we supposed that there were traitors in the camp of Scindhia who betrayed their master's interests.

Scindhia had now to rue for the blunders of his predecessor. Madhoji was not a statesman with the gift of foresight and forethought. His military organization was a faulty one and showed lack of statesmanship. He had been advised by Nana Fadnavis not to engage European officers in his service. But he did not follow the advice of the

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great Nana. Warren Hastings came to an understanding with Madhoji and furnished him with European officers. That Governor-General knew that this 'gift of the Greeks' would compass the ruin of Scindhia. And he was not mistaken.

If Madhoji Scindhia had so great an admiration for the discipline and drill of European officers and soldiers, the proper thing for him would have been to establish a military school for the training of his subjects in European arts of warfare Instead of doing this, he filled all the high posts in his army by employing Europeans who were all adventurers and men of no character. This was a blunder for which his successor had to pay a very heavy penalty.

The great Machiavelli, in his "Art of War," has truly observed that

> "no wise ruler of states ever doubted but that a country should be defended by its own inhabitants. Had the Venetians comprehended all this they would have established a new Empire of the world. In fact, by sea they fought with their own men, and were always victorious; on land they employed mercenary Captains and hireling soldiers; and then had not a leg left them to stand upon. The Romans on the other hand were far wiser, and being at first only practised in fighting on land, when they were opposed at Sea by the Carthaginians, speedily trained their people to naval conflicts and became equally successful."

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Madhoji Scindhia should have acted on the above quoted principle of Machiavelli.

But it was not only the entertainment of Europeans which is to be so much deplored as the revolution that Madhoji had prematurely brought about in the Maratha tactics of warfare. His substitution of "the old lamp for the new one" of the Europeans was fatal for the Marathas. Such was the opinion even of the British military officers and statesman. In the course of his letter to Major Shawe, dated 18th November, 1803, General Wellesley wrote :—

"Scindhia's armies had actually been brought to a very favorable state of discipline, and his power had become formidable by the exertions of the European officers in his service; but I think it is much to be doubted, whether his power or rather that of the Maratha nation, would not have been more formidable, at least to the British Government, if they had never had an European, as an infantry soldier, in their service; and had carried on their operations, in the manner of the original Marathas, only by means of Cavalry.

"I have no doubt whatever but that the military spirit of the nation has been destroyed by their establishment of infantry and artillery, possibly, indeed, by other causes; at all events, it is certain that those establishments, however formidable, afford us a good object of attack in a war with the Marathas, and that the destruction of them contributes to the success of the contest."

Of course, it is impossible for us to share this

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opinion of General Wellesley. The mistake did not consist in having European arms of precision and raising corps of infantry and artillery on the model of European States, but in entertaining European officers who were not true to their salt but seized every opportunity to betray their masters. It was this mistake of the Marathas which contributed to the success of the British.

Turning to the battle of Assaye, we have already expressed our opinion that the treachery of the European officers in Scindhia's employ accounts for his defeat. That Scindhia's artillery and infantry were excellent, is borne testimony to by General Wellesley himself. On the 3rd October, 1803, the latter wrote to his brother, Hon'ble H. Wellesley, that

> "Scindhia's French infantry were far better than Tippoo's, his artillery excellent, and his ordnance so good, and so well equipped, that it answers for our service. We never could use Tippoo's."

Having such infantry, artillery and ordnance, it is impossible to explain the defeat of Scindhia, except on the hypothesis of treachery of his European officers. At the battle of Assaye, according to the statistics of the British themselves, the loss in the killed, wounded and missing of the detachment under the command of General Wellesley was very great. If we believe in their statement that Scindhia's army

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at Assaye was four or five times larger than that under the command of General Wellesley, then the loss of the Marathas according to the figures given by the British themselves, was proportionately not so great as theirs.* It is impossible therefore to under-

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* From the despatches of the Duke of Wellington we learn that at the battle of Assye, he had under his command 8,000 men, 1,600 cavalry, and 17 guns. Whereas, according to the account of the British Scindhia had 50,000 men and 128 guns.

From the return of the Killed, Wounded and Missing of the Detachment of the Army under the Command of Major General Wellesley at the battle of Assye, it appears that the loss of the British was by no means a light one. Among their officers and soldiers, 164 were killed, 411 wounded and 8 were missing. Among the non-Christian sepoys 245 were killed, and 1211 wounded and 18 were missing.

There is no reliable statistics of Scindhia's loss. But dating his letter from Camp 28th September, 1803, General Wellesley wrote to Major Shawe: "It is said that they (the Marathas) lost one thousand two hundred men killed; the wounded and dying are scattered throughout the country in all directions. *I give you the hircarrah reports. God knows whether they are true, but I believe they are.*" From the words put in italics, it will be noticed that General Wellesley was not sure about the loss of the enemy which his spies had reported to him. But supposing that the reports were true, it is clear that Scindhia did not, proportionately, to his large army, lose so many men in killed and wounded as the British.

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stand how and why so much of ordnance and pieces of canon should fall into the hands of General Wellesley's force. Why should Scindhia's army leave the battle-field at all and that also in confusion and disorder, when they had still in their possession plenty of ammunition and canon and other appliances requisite for war? It is also singular that not a single European officer and man in the service of Scindhia was killed or wounded at the battle of Assaye. From all these facts we are obliged to conclude that the defeat was due to treachery on the part of Scindhia's European officers and men.

It is true that in the official despatches of the British the victory gained by General Wellesley at Assaye has not been attributed to the treachery of Scindhia's European officers. But it would not have done for them to mention it. However, some of General Wellesley's letters throw a curious sidelight on this subject. Dating his letter from Camp at Ferdapoor, 23rd October, 1803, he wrote to Colonel Murray :—

"I learn from Colonel Stevenson that the beaten infantry has gone that way from Asserghur, sixteen of

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It is also a very significant fact, that the British did not make any prisoners. It is probable that out of 1200 said to have been left dead on the battle-field, many were wounded to whom the British gave no quarter and showed no mercy but despatched in order to swell the number of the dead of the enemy.

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their European officers and sergeants have come over to the Colonel, and he says that they are entirely ruined by the battle of the 23rd of September, and never can be formed into corps again."

Then General Wellesley expressed his great satisfaction at the miserable plight to which Scindhia's brigades were reduced, for he wrote :—

"at all events their European officers have left them."

Reading all these despatches between the lines, there can be no doubt that the victory of the British at the battle of Assaye was purchased by bribing the Europeans in the service of Scindhia.* So no one need feel amazed that the troops, so well drilled and well armed as Scindhia's, should have been incapable of facing the enemy and left the battle-field in confusion and disorder, and without even trying to take with them or destroy the large number of canon and vast quantity of ordnance which fell into the hands of their foreign adversaries.

That there were traitors in the camp of Scindhia and that the disaster which befell him at Assaye was due to the treachery of the European officers and men in his employ would be evident when we remember the composition of his force. On the 26th October, 1803, General Wellesley wrote to Major Shawe, that

"Sydenham's account of Scindhia's force is tolerably

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correct. We understand, however, that Pohlman's brigade of eight battalions was called the 1st, which was destroyed on the 23rd of September: the two other brigades in that action are not accounted for by Sydenham: they were four battalions of Begum Sumroo, and four battalions of Dupont."

The two brigades in that action of Assaye, not accounted for by Sydenham, were in all probability the very brigades which betrayed Scindhia and were the means of inflicting defeat on him, since it seems a secret understanding existed between their commanders and the Governor-General and his brothers. Dupont was bought over as reported by General Wellesley to the Governor-General.*

Regarding Begum Sumroo's brigade, we should remember the intrigue the British had entered into

* On the 24th October, 1803, General Wellesley wrote to the Marquess Wellesley:— "Sixteen officers and Sergeants belonging to the Campoos (*i.e.* Scindhia's Camp) have joined Colonel Stevenson under your Excellency's proclamation of the 29th August. I will hereafter send a list of their names, and an account of the pay each is to receive." Among these officers was Dupont. It seems clear then that he betrayed Scindhia at Assye and hence was to receive the "pay" mentioned in his Excellency's proclamation of the 29th August, 1803. Otherwise had he loyally served Scindhia, and been defeated and taken prisoner at Assye, he would not have been entitled to receive any "pay" or marked consideration at the hands of the Governor-General.

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with her. Lieut.-General Lake, in his Memorandum submitted to the Governor-General on the 18th July, 1803, suggested that

"the most essential advantages may be derived from an union with Begum Sumroo, who has long evinced a desire to be taken under the protection of the English.

* * * * *

"Four of her battalions are now with Scindhia, which may prove an obstacle to an early declaration of her sentiments, but if a rupture actually takes place, and she is sincere in what she has often declared, *means might be contrived to enable those battalions to join General Wellesley."*

Upon this suggestion, the Governor-General observed :—

"This suggestion is extremely proper, and orders will be immediately sent to Colonel Scott; Mr. Mercer's instructions include this point."

It is clear that the English intrigued with Begum Sumroo to corrupt her men, and means were contrived to enable her battalions to betray Scindhia. These battalions were present at Assaye, and it would not be taxing one's imagination or intelligence too far to understand that at Assaye these battalions played into the hands of General Wellesley and contributed to his success on that battle-field.

In his "History of the Marathas," Captain Grant-Duff writes :—

"Most of Scindhia's battalions (at Assye) laboured under

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disadvantages by the cessation of the British part of their European officers, who, in consequence of a proclamation by the British Government, quitted the Marathas at the breaking out of the war. This proclamation was addressed to all British subjects, native as well as European, offering them the same pay which they enjoyed with Scindhia. It was judiciously extended to all Europeans, and in regard to the British officers was equally humane and politic." (p. 574).

Of course, some deserted Scindhia at the commencement of the war, while others remained with him to play the traitor in his camp.

Appendix to Chapter XXVI.

THE FIELD OF ASSAYE.

In the *Pioneer* of 9th January, 1899, an officer signing his name as R. B. gave the following description of the battle-field of Assaye:—

Assaye is situated in a remote corner of the dominions of His Highness the Nizam of Hyderabad, near to where the northern boundary of his territory abuts on the assigned province of Berar and the Khandeish district of the Bombay Presidency. It is situated some thirty miles north of Jalna.

The little known parts of the Deccan, that is little known to those who have not the fortune to have their lot cast in such remote spots, abound in places of historic interest. Assaye, Argaum, Gawilgarh—what stirring memories do these recall for those who have studied the Wellington Despatches. Of these, Assaye is the most im-

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portant, for on that field Sir Arthur Wellesley commenced the work which he completed a few months later at Argaum, where the hosts of Scindhia were finally defeated.

Between Jalna and Assaye lies a dreary tract of arid grass land interpersed with patches of cultivation, which become more frequent in the valleys of the rivers that intersect the country at frequent intervals. The principal of these rivers is the Purna, six miles south of the battle field, on both banks of which is built the village of Nalni, whence the British General advanced with his small force on that memorable September morning.

It was around the village of Assaye itself that the hottest of the fight took place. Here the enemy's infantry clustered, whilst a hundred guns thundered from their midst. Here took place the famous bayonet charge of the 74th, in which that gallant regiment maintained the reputation that it had already won, and has since confirmed on many a field. Here, too, the brave Maxwell, slain in the hour of victory, charged at the head of the 19th and Native Cavalry, and secured the defeat which the bayonets of the 78th turned into a rout. From Assaye the scattered remnants of the Mahratta army, which had been drawn up so proudly confident of victory in the morning, fled before nightfall, leaving on the field 2,000 dead, and all their heavy ordnance and many standards as trophies to the victors.

There is nothing now remarkable to indicate the field of battle. The village of Assaye is a type of all these Deccan villages—a quiet, sleepy hamlet, composed of squalid habitations standing amid the mouldering ruins of the mud fort, an edifice inseparable from all villages in this part of the world. One wonders where the dead were buried. Where lie the 428 gallant souls who fell on the field of battle? Nothing is there to mark the place of sepulture. No monument indicates where gallant Maxwell sleeps the

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sleep of the brave; or where rest the remains of Mackay, the Captain of Madras Cavalry who, in direct contravention of orders, for he was employed on the baggage staff, joined in the battle, and there met his death. It is related by Colonel Welsh in his *Military Reminiscences*, that "when in the very heat of action, news was brought to the General that Captain Mackay was killed his countenance changed, and a tear which fell upon his cheek was nature's involuntary homage to a kindred spirit."

No sign of battle now in this peaceful hamlet, slumbering in the December sun on the bank of the Juah river! But the villagers will produce mementoes in the shape of bullets of lead and rusty iron that are frequently turned up when they are tilling the soil.

R. B.

Commenting on the above, Colonel G. Carlton, Retired Royal Artillery, sent the following communication, which was published in that Indian daily on the 3rd March, 1899:—

THE FIELD OF ASSAYE.

TO THE EDITOR,

SIR, In the *Pioneer* of the 9th of January, which was kindly sent me by last India post, there is an interesting account of a visit to the village and field of battle of Assaye (spelt Assye in the Wellington despatches, and so pronounced by the natives). Perhaps you may think a few notes of a visit to the same historic field thirty-six years ago of sufficient interest to entitle them to a kind reception by the *Pioneer*. I started with another officer of my battery from Jalna so as to arrive at Assaye on the 23rd September,

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the anniversary of the battle, our object in so timing ourselves, was to see what the depth of water would be at the ford across the Kaitna, as the same might be assumed as its depth when our infantry forded the river in 1803. There had been some heavy rain two days before our arrival, but I found that mounted on an Arab horse 14-2 in height, I was able by raising my feet well up behind to get across the 70 yards or so of water without wetting my boots. We put up for the night in the verandah of the native rest-house or chaultry outside the village, which was filled, the natives of the place said, with our wounded after the great battle. Next day we found two old villagers who said they were boys when the battle was fought and that they were the only two still alive in the village who were living there then; they were, I should say, about seventy years of age. In reply to our questions about the Mahratta army and the comparatively little use made of their artillery, they gave an explanation that was quite new to us, and possibly true to some extent, *viz.*, that for some weeks (I think three) before the battle the Mahratta feast of the Dusserah had been going on (it is, if I remember right, a ten days' orgie) and this had delayed their army so long in camp that the forage in the immediate neighbourhood had been exhausted and the artillery bullocks (all guns were formerly in India drawn by bullocks) had to be sent a long way off to graze, so when "Wesley Sahib Bahadur" came down on them so suddenly the gun bullocks could not be all got back in time to move the guns into the new position that was taken up by the enemy, and such guns as were got into action had to be dragged by sepoys. Both these old fellows told us they remembered seeing "Wesley Sahib." They described him as a man with a small head, and broad shoulders, moving their hands

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to their heads and shoulders significantly. They also said he could not speak any Hindustani. They expressed great admiration for the strict discipline (*bundobust*) "Wesley Sahib" had in his army, contrasting it with the bad conduct of Scindhia's troops. Your recent correspondent found no trace of the graves of those who fell in action on our side. I remember seeing the grave of Colonel Maxwell; it was marked by a flat slab raised off the ground and his name was cut on it. There were a few others near it, but in a more broken down state, no inscriptions legible. All were under a clump of trees, mangoe or banyan trees, situated a short distance beyond the village of Assaye, and I think near the steep bank of the Inah ravine. Major-General Wellesley, just thirty-four years old when he gained this great victory, in a letter written next day to Major Shawe explains the necessity he unexpectedly was under, when he discovered the enemy's position, to engage him some distance further to his own right, and he says: "For a length of time they did not see my infantry, or discover my design." Upon his personal reconnaissance he had, acting upon the "quick and sure vision" that Napier speaks of as a gift possessed by him in eminent degree, came to the bold decision to move his whole force, though within tactical distance of the enemy greatly outnumbering him in cavalry and artillery, across his front, but anyone who has ridden over the ground will have seen how well suited it was in its parallel undulation as the Kaitna is approached to conceal the infantry, as stated by the General and thus to prevent the discovery of his design. I have been tempted to linger I fear too long for the patience of your readers over this excursion of mine, perhaps it is because to many of us retired officers, originally of the old Indian local service, there is a seductive glamour in our

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early stripling associations with India, its scenes, its history, and our ordered study of the language of its people; we went out often mere boy cadets and our earliest manhood associations were affected by

"The ever silent spaces of the East
Far folded mists and gleaming halls of morn,"
So "Still o'er the scenes our memory wakes."
And fondly broods with miser care;
Time but the impression deeper makes
As streams their channels deeper wear."

G. CARLTON, COLONEL,
Retired, Royal Artillery.

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CHAPTER XXVII.

OPERATIONS AFTER THE BATTLE OF ASSYE.

At Assye, Scindhia lost almost the whole of his guns and ordnance, but his loss in men was not very great. On the 24th September, 1803, Colonel Stevenson was ordered to pursue Scindhia's fugitive forces, as General Wellesley encamped at Assye for a few days in order to write his despatches, and also to give rest to his men as well as to "place his numerous wounded in security." Mr. Mill (vi. p. 358) writes:—

"The enemy had been so little broken or dispersed by their defeat* that they had little to dread, from the pursuit of Colonel Stevenson."

It seems that Colonel Stevenson was not in a mood to pursue Scindhia's forces. He avoided them but attacked Scindhia's territories, of which an account will be given presently.

After the battle of Assye, the existence of traitors in his camp was evident to Scindhia, for the disaster

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* This confirms the statement we have made before that the disaster at Assye was due to the treachery of Scindhia's European officers and men.

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could not but have been attributed to treachery. Under the circumstance, he saw his safety in concluding peace with the British. Accordingly, he authorized Baloo Koonjer to open negotiations with them. Baloo Koonjer was one of the servants of the Peishwa and was sent by the latter to Scindhia to communicate to him the alliance that he (the Peishwa) had contracted with the British by the Treaty of Bassein and also, it would seem, to invite Scindhia to Poona.

It was the interest of the Governor-General and his gallant brother to describe Balloojee Koonger as a traitor. The former in a postscript to his despatch to the Secret Committee, dated 1st November, 1803, wrote :—

"Ballojee Koonger was originally dispatched by his Highness the Peishwa from Bassein to Dowlut Rao Scindhia, for the purpose of explaining to that Chieftain the nature of the engagements concluded between the Peishwa and the British Government; but, with the accustomed versatility and treachery of a Maratha Politician, Ballojee Koonger has subsequently attached himself to the service of Dowlut Rao Scindhia."

Similar was the language used by General Wellesley towards Ballojee. But the historian of the Marathas, Captain Grant Duff, who was thoroughly acquainted with all the events connected with the war, does not call Balajee a traitor. On the contrary, he describes him as

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"the Peishwa's most confidential agent, who, notwithstanding the war, continued in Scindhia's Camp."

We shall presently recur to Balajee's reasons for continuing in Scindhia's camp.

About a week or at the most ten days after the battle of Assye, Balajee wrote to General Wellesley to settle the terms of pacification. The letter of Ballajee to General Wellesley is not published amongst the printed Despatches of the Duke of Wellington. But from the tone of the latter's reply, dated 5th October, 1803, it is not difficult to conjecture the purport of Ballajee's letter. It seems that Ballajee tried to make out that Scindhia's intentions were pacific and that the proof of the genuineness of his desire for peace was to be found in the dogged perseverance with which he clung to every chance of bringing the negotiations to a satisfactory issue. The reasons of Balajee's not quitting the camp of Scindhia seem to be that the British had never sent in an ultimatum to the Maratha Confederates and, as said before, they always confined themselves to vague generalities and never referred to the minimum of what they would accept. From General Wellesley's letter to Ballajee, it also appears that the latter charged Colonel Collins with bringing about the rupture between the Maratha Confederates and the British for "Col. Collins had quitted the camp (of

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Scindhia) without apprizing the Maharaja of his intentions, or going through the customary forms."

From the strong position which Ballajee had taken up and from the manner in which his letter exposed the treacherous conduct of the Resident with Scindhia, there seemed to be no other valid argument left for General Wellesley than to charge Ballajee with being a traitor and abuse him to his heart's content.*

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* Ballajee Koonger seems to have been an honest man and had the welfare of the Maratha Empire at heart. He did not and would not play into the hands of the British, who were then giving effect to the maxims laid down by Machiavelli and corrupting the Peishwa's ministers. The Christians, the Founder of whose creed taught them to pray daily to God, "Lead us not into temptations but deliver us from all evils," were not ashamed to bribe the Peishwa's ministers, to tempt them to betray their master. In the course of his letter dated Camp at Assye, 28th September, 1803, General Wellesley wrote to Lieut. Colonel Close, Resident at Poona:—

"Lord Wellesley has taken up the question of paying the Peishwa's ministers upon a great scale. The Peishwa is certainly sincere in his intentions to adhere to the alliance; but * * * the feelings of his mind are so far different from those which guide our conduct, that with the best intentions it must be expected that we shall frequently clash. * * * The Peishwa has no ministers. He is everything himself, and everything is little. In my opinion, therefore, we ought to pay those who are supposed to be and are called his ministers, not to keep the machine

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General Wellesley's head was turned by the success that had so far attended his arms. He was, therefore, not inclined to lend an ear to the proposals for peace which Ballajee Koonger urged. On the other hand, his appetite was whetted by the spoils he

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of Government in motion in consistence with the objects of the alliance as we do at Hyderabad, but, to have intelligence of what passes in the Peishwa's secret councils, in order that we may check him in time when it may be necessary."

Ballajee Koonjer was the Peishwa's most confidential agent; those who have read Grant Duff's History of the Marathas are aware of the faithful manner in which he had served his master, and on one occasion, he even risked his life for the welfare of the subjects of his master's dominion. The British could not buy him over with their gold to betray his master's interests and hence they did not scruple to call him a traitor. There is not the tittle of an evidence to show that he went over to the Camp of Scindhia, or betrayed the Peishwa. Moreover, when we remember the fact that Balajee Koonger had once attempted to imprison (if not assassinate) Sirzee Rao Ghatgay (very closely related to Dowlut Rao Scindhia), it is impossible to believe that he could have ever been a *persona grata* with Scindhia or taken into his confidence. It is certain that he loved his master Bajee Rao and never betrayed his interests. It is equally certain that there was not much love lost between him and Scindhia. Hence his testimony regarding Colonel Collins' conduct in precipitating the war should carry conviction into the mind of every unprejudiced person.

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gathered at the battle-field of Assye. But so far no treasure, that is, ready money, had fallen into his hands. And therefore he was anxious to prosecute the war with all possible vigor. As said before, he detached Colonel Stevenson to pursue Scindhia. That officer avoided Scindhia, for although the latter had lost the whole of his guns and ordnance through the treachery of European officers, his power was still considered formidable ; for he was still strong in his cavalry and mounted infantry. It was therefore thought prudent and politic to avoid pursuing him. It would have been better if the Maratha Confederates had taken the offensive and attacked the British. But after the disaster of Assye, they seemed to act on the defensive only, and also tried to conclude peace with the latter. This was a mistake for which they had to pay very dearly. The reason which seems to have deterred them from taking the offensive was the existence of traitors in their camp. Neither good generalship nor far-seeing statesmanship would have been of any avail to them when their camp reeked with traitors. Moreover, they were reduced to great straits, as their commissariat supplies had fallen off. General Wellesley seized some of the cart-loads of grain which had been proceeding to Scindhia's camp and so in a triumphant mood he wrote to his brother, the Governor-General, on the 6th October, 1803, that "they (the Maratha Confederates) were in great dis-

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tress, and the price of grain in their camp one seer for a rupee." All the above mentioned considerations made the Confederates desirous of peace or at the most of acting on the defensive.

After the battle of Assye, it seems that the Raja of Berar separated from Scindhia. From the letter of General Wellesley to his brother, Henry Wellesley (afterwards Lord Cowley), then in England, dated 24th January, 1804, we learn that

"after the battle of Assye, those two chiefs fled* into Candeish * * *.

"Colonel Stevenson followed them down the Adjuntee Ghaut. They fled† to the Taptee, along which river they marched to the westward. As soon as I had placed my numerous wounded in security, I marched with my division to Adjuntee, and ordered Colonel Stevenson to advance towards Burhanpoor, and levy a contribution upon that city, and lay siege to Asseerghur."

General Wellesley does not mention why the pursuit of the Maratha Confederates was given up. It will be remembered that Colonel Stevenson had been detached to pursue Scindhia and the Raja of

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* The Maratha confederates *retreated* and *not fled*. It should be remembered that Assye was not in the territories of any of the confederates. After the disaster at Assye, it was only natural for the confederates to retreat into their own dominions. They retreated in order to protect their territories from the attacks of the British.

† Retreated and not fled.

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Berar and with this intention he left Assye on the 24th September, that is, the day following the battle. It would not have been difficult to overtake them had he been possessed of *dash* and courage like Napoleon. But the Marathas eluded him and his pursuit of them resembled the chase after the will-o-the-wisp. It was probably on this account that General Wellesley ordered him to march on to Burhanpoor and took upon himself the task of pursuing the Confederates. But he himself does not seem to have fared better than Colonel Stevenson. He wrote:—

"Upon my arrival at Adjuntee, I found that Scindhia and the Raja of Berar had quitted the Taptee, and had moved to the southward, apparently with an intention of passing out of Candeish through the hills situated north of the Godavery, and of invading the territories of the Peishwa or the Nizam, and all the remains of the defeated infantry had been sent across the Taptee towards Hindustan. This movement was intended to divert my attention from the siege of Asseerghur; or if I should persevere in that operation, the confederates would have invaded the territories of the Peishwa and the Nizam, and would have entirely destroyed the rich provinces of the latter, upon which I depended for resources of grain to enable me to carry on the war, and would, at all events, have cut off or impeded the communication which I had with Poona and Bombay by Ahmednagar. I therefore determined to leave the siege of Asseerghur to Colonel Stevenson's division, and to march myself to the southward, in order to follow the motions of the confederates.

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"On the 11th of October, I arrived in the neighbourhood of Aurangabad, and there remained till the 15th. On that night I received most accurate accounts of the disposition of the enemy's army, from which I was of opinion that they intended to move upon Colonel Stevenson, in order to interrupt the siege of Asseerghur, and I returned immediately towards Adjuntee.

"I arrived there on the 18th, and descended the Ghaut into Candeish on the 19th. Scindhia, who had returned to the northward, then halted his army at Ahoonah, on the Taptee, within three marches of Burhanpoor.

"Colonel Stevenson arrived on the 15th at Burhanpoor, of which place he took possession; he marched to Asseerghur on the 17th, drove in the enemy, and took possession of the pettah on the 18th, by which means he had a fine situation from whence to carry on his attack against the fort; he broke ground on the 19th, and the fort surrendered on the 21st."

The fall of Burhanpoor and of Asseerghur was almost a foregone conclusion. No surprise need be expressed at the ease with which both these places fell into the hands of the British. It is again, the same old story of the traitors in Scindhia's camp betraying their master. As usual, these traitors were Europeans. The short-sighted policy of Madhoji Scindhia in employing European officers and men was now costing his successor the principality he had built up. On the 23rd October, 1803, General Wellesley wrote to Colonel Close, Resident at Poonah;—

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"I have the pleasure to inform you that I have reason to believe that Colonel Stevenson took possession of the fort of Asseerghur on the 21st. He writes on the 19th, that the infantry which had collected between that place and Burhanpoor was gone off towards the Nerbudda. Sixteen of the European officers, sergeants, etc., had come in to him on the terms of the proclamation, among whom were Colonel Dupont, Captain Mercier, and Captain Mann."

So then from the official despatches of General Wellesley, it is quite evident that the fall of Burhanpoor and Asseerghur was encompassed by the treachery of Scindhia's European officers and men.

There was now very little left for General Wellesley to accomplish in the Deccan. But his task was not over, and he did not think of concluding peace with the Maratha Confederates till after the siege of Gawilghur and the battle of Argaum.

If he did not conclude peace with them, he at least deceived them ; for at the time when he fought the battle of Argaum, there was an armistice with the Maratha Confederates. On the 24th October, 1803, he wrote to the Governor-General :—

"Since I forwarded to your Excellency the copies of my correspondence with Ballojee Koonger on the subject of peace, I have received various messages and letters through different channels on the same subject, * * * I have uniformly referred them to the answer which I wrote to Ballojee Koonger.

"It is reported that Dowlut Rao Scindhia and the

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Rajah of Berar have quarrelled, that the latter intends to endeavour to obtain a peace through the mediation of Amrut Rao, and the former through that of the Peishwa, or by secret negotiation. Excepting that these chiefs have separated their armies, I have no reason to believe that they have quarrelled, and I can give your Excellency no information to enable you to form a judgment of the truth of the remainder of the report.

"I think it probable, however, that negotiations for peace will soon be commenced by those chiefs."

It was evident then that the Maratha Confederates desired for peace and that with this object in view they had separated their armies. Instead of trying to conclude peace with the Confederates, these very circumstances appeared so tempting to General Wellesley as to attack them, as he thought, to utterly crush them.

So long neither the General nor his lieutenant, Colonel Stevenson, made any attempt to pursue Scindhia or the Raja of Berar. But now when these Maratha princes had separated their armies a very favorable opportunity occurred to the British to pursue them, and they tried to eagerly seize it and turn it to their advantage. Colonel Stevenson was ordered to watch the movement of Scindhia while General Wellesley himself went against the Raja of Berar. But the general was not lucky in his expedition against the Bhonslah. In his letter to his brother, Henry Wellesley, dated 24th January, 1804,

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General Wellesley mentioned the causes of the failure of his expedition. He wrote:—

"I arrived at Adjuntee, on the top of the Ghaut, on the 25th (October 1803), marched on the following days to the southward, and passed Aurangabad on the 29th. The Rajah of Berar, in the usual style of a Maratha, had spent his time after he had come out of Candeish in plundering the country, and negotiating with Amrut Rao, who was encamped on the Godavery, to induce that chief to join him.*

"The Rajah was still, on the 29th (October 1803), between Aurangabad and the Godavery, and I hoped to have been able to attack him. He marched, however, on the night of the 29th, and between that time and the night of the 31st, during the whole of which I was in his neighbourhood, he marched with his camp five times. On the 31st, in the morning, he detached a body of five thousand horse to attack a large convoy on its march from the southward to join the troops on the frontier, the arrival of which was delayed by the obstinacy of the officer who commanded,† before it crossed the Godavery, and which river it crossed only on the 30th. * * * * *

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* The Raja of Berar was negotiating with Amrut Rao to intercede on his behalf with the British to conclude peace. He was no more plundering the country than the British were. His army was in great distress for want of grain and he was levying contributions on the villages for the maintenance of his army. It was no plunder but a perfectly legitimate process with military commanders.

† The officer was named Captain Seton. General Wellesley had him Court-martialled. On the 2nd November,

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"The necessity of taking care of this convoy was unfortunate. If I had not been under the necessity of directing the movements of the troops in such manner as to protect it, at the same time that I pushed the Rajah, I should have had it in any power to have destroyed him between the 29th and 31st of October (1803).

"But all the subsequent solid operations of the war depended upon the arrival of that convoy, and it was more important to secure it, than to gain a victory over a body of horse; in the attempt to obtain which I might have failed, and then I should have lost the convoy."

After the failure of his expedition against the Raja of Berar and when he found that Colonel Stevenson also could do nothing against Dowlut Rao Scindhia, the General thought it expedient to lend a favorable ear to the negotiations for peace which the Maratha Confederates had been proposing. Accordingly he wrote a letter on the 30th October, 1803, to Ballojee Kooneer (this time he did not abuse him or call him a traitor). He wrote :—

"I have received your letter * * * and Colonel Stevenson has transmitted to me a Persian letter, in which you have

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1803, he wrote to Major Kirkpatrick :—"I have to inform you that I have brought Captain Seton to trial before a General Court Martial, for disobedience of orders, in omitting to march from Dharore on the 1st of October, according to the orders he had received, by which the risk to which the convoy was exposed would have been avoided, and my movements against the enemy would not have been cramped by the necessity of taking care of it."

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informed him that Mahomed Meer Khan was about to be sent on a mission to me. I shall be happy to see Meer Khan. I will receive him in a manner suitable to his rank, and I will pay every attention to what he may have to communicate."

At the same time, he also wrote to Mahomed Meer Khan as follows:—

"I have received your letter, and Mirza Wahed Beg has communicated to me what you desired he should and Colonel Stevenson has sent me different letters which you have written to him, and one which Ballojee Koonger has written to him in the Persian language, by which I learn that you are coming here on a mission to me. I shall be happy to see you, and will receive you with the honors due to your rank and character, and I shall pay every attention to what you may have to communicate."

But it was not Mahomed Meer Khan who came as an envoy on the part of the Maratha Confederates to the British General to negotiate for peace. It was Jeswunt Rao Ghorpooray who was deputed to settle the terms of peace. The circumstances attending the deputation of this person to General Wellesley are related by the latter in his despatch dated 11th November, 1803, to the Governor-General.

The result of the negotiations was that on the 23rd November, 1803, an armistice was concluded by General Wellesley with Dowlut Rao Scindhia. Although the envoys solicited a cessation of arms for both the Confederates, the General refused it to the

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Raja of Berar, because it was alleged that he had sent no envoy, nor expressed any desire for peace. It was convenient for the General to ignore the fact that the envoys sent, represented the Raja of Berar as well as Scindhia. But General Wellesley had been smarting under the failure that had attended his expedition against the Bhonslah and therefore, he was not amenable to reason, justice or fairplay.

Another reason for not concluding an armistice with the Raja of Berar was that General Wellesley wished to play off Scindhia against the Bhonslah. Writing to Major Shawe (Private Secretary to the Governor-General), on the 23rd November, 1803, General Wellesley said :—

"The Rajah of Berar's troops are not included in it, and consequently there becomes a division of interest between these two chiefs. All confidence in Scindhia, if it ever existed, must be at an end, and the confederacy is, *ipso facto,* dissolved."

From the letter from which the extract has been given above, we learn that the motives which prompted General Wellesley to conclude the armistice were dishonest and treacherous. He wrote :—

"I have already apprized the Governor-General that it was not in my power to do anything more against Dowlut Rao Scindhia. * * * *

"Scindhia has with him in the field an army of horse only. It is impossible to expect to make any impression upon this army, unless by following it for a great length

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of time and distance. To do this would remove our troops still farther than they are already from all the sources of supply, and would prevent the operations against the Raja of Berar, from which alone, in my opinion, we are to expect peace. * * * *

"I can see no inconvenience whatever that can result from the measure: and if the negotiations for peace are delayed in consequence of having concluded the cessation of hostilities, I have it in my power to put an end to that agreement whenever I may think proper.

"The rule not to cease from hostilities till peace is concluded is a good one in general: and I have adhered to it, in practice, at the siege of Ahmednagar; and I have ordered an adherence to it in all instances of that kind. *But in this, I think it is a rule, of which the breach is more beneficial than the observance."*

Yes, he could not see any inconvenience, nay in his mode of thinking "the breach was more beneficial than the observance," because that was the way to lull the Maratha Confederates, or at least Scindhia, into a false sense of security, by making him believe that the British would cease all hostilities and conclude peace. But such were not the real intentions of the British General. He merely wanted time to make preparations and treacherously attack the Maratha Confederates after having thrown them off their guard by concluding the armistice. On the 24th November, 1803, he wrote to Lieutenant-Colonel Close :—

"I have agreed to the cessation of hostilities on the

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ground of my incapability to do Scindhia further injury, as stated in my dispatch to the Governor-General of the 24th October; on that of it being impossible to injure his army of horse; on that of the injury he may do me in the operations against Gawilghur and in Guzerat, to which quarter he has sent Bappojee Scindhia; and on the political ground of dividing his interests from those of the Raja of Berar, and thereby, in fact, dissolving the confederacy."

That the real motive of the British General to conclude the armistice was to gain time, he himself admitted. On the 24th November, 1803, he wrote to the Governor-General:—

"If advantage should be taken of the cessation of hostilities to delay the negotiations for peace, your Excellency will observe that *I have the power of putting an end to it when I please; and that, supposing I am obliged to put an end to it, on the day after I shall receive its ratification, I shall at least have gained so much time everywhere for my operations, and shall have succeeded in dividing the enemy entirely.*"

The treachery and hypocrisy, then, of the British General agreeing to the cessation of hostilities are quite evident. He took advantage of the armistice by attacking Scindhia and fighting the battle of Argaum. By granting the armistice, he gained time in making preparations. It will be observed that the armistice was concluded on the 23rd November. At that time Colonel Stevenson, who had been ordered to make preparations for the siege of Gawilghur, had not

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entered the territory of the Raja of Berar. General Wellesley had not also been able to assist Colonel Stevenson by sending reinforcements. Writing on the 24th January, 1804, to his brother Henry Wellesley, then in England, General Wellesley said:—

"Towards the middle of November, Colonel Stevenson had completed all his equipments for the siege of Gawilghur, and was enabled to quit Burhanpoor. He marched up the valley of the Poorna river to Ballapoor in Berar, where he arrived on the 23rd, and he was joined on the 24th by the convoy which had been saved from the Rajah of Berar by Captain Baynes' affair at Umber, on the 31st October, and my march to the southward."

There was no need now on the part of the General to observe the truce. He was the first to violate it. He fabricated the pretext that Scindhia had not carried out one of the essential conditions of the armistice. He wrote to his brother Henry Wellesley, on the 24th January, 1803:—

"You will have observed, that after I had concluded the treaty for suspending hostilities with Scindhia, I had fought his army at Argaum on the 29th of November. At that time he had not ratified the treaty, and he had not performed any one of its stipulations; and I gave notice to his vakeels that I should attack him if I should meet his army."

The stipulations of the treaty give the lie direct to the above statement of the British General. The

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treaty was concluded on the 23rd November, 1803 and the concluding article of the treaty laid down:—

"This agreement is to be ratified by the Maharaja Dowlut Rao Scindhia, and his ratification is to be given to Major-General Wellesley in the space of ten days from this date."

So then according to this stipulation of the treaty, hostilities should have ceased till the 3rd December, 1803. Scindhia had been given ten days to ratify it, and it was nothing less than treachery on the part of General Wellesley to have attacked him within the space of ten days after the conclusion of the treaty.

General Wellesley found fault with Scindhia for his not carrying out the second article of the treaty, which ran as follows:—

"To prevent accidents, and in order to ensure the execution of the 1st article, it is agreed, that there shall be an interval of twenty coss between the different British and allied armies, and that the Maharajah will march with his army, and take up a position twenty coss to the eastward of Ellichpoor, and he will forage still further to the eastward."

Scindhia accordingly was marching with his army, but the British General was following him, in order, it appears, to prevent him from fulfilling the condition of the treaty. His real intention was to gain time to make his preparations and then to

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attack Scindhia after lulling his suspicions by concluding the armistice.

It was under such circumstances, having every advantage on his side, that General Wellesley treacherously attacked Scindhia and fought the battle of Argaum on the 29th November, 1803, that is, six days only after the conclusion of the Treaty of Armistice. In vain did the vakeels from Dowlut Rao Scindhia press him not to attack their master. He justified his conduct by writing to the Governor-General on the 30th November, 1803,

> "Your Excellency has been informed, that on the 23rd I had consented to a suspension of hostilities with the troops of Dowlut Rao Scindhia, in this quarter and Guzerat. The condition on which this agreement depended, *viz.*, 'that Scindhia should occupy a position twenty coss to the east of Ellichpoor,' had not been carried into execution."

Regarding this pretext for attacking Scindhia, we have already observed that in the agreement there was no date fixed by which Scindhia was to have occupied a position twenty coss to the east of Ellichpoor; but from the last article of the Treaty, it was evident that the truce should have at least lasted for 10 (ten) days from the date of the conclusion of the Treaty. It was therefore nothing short of treachery on the part of the British General to have attacked Scindhia on the 29th November, 1803.

It was a foregone conclusion, therefore, that

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General Wellesley should come out victorious at the battle of Argaum. And so he did. On the 30th November, 1803, he wrote his official despatch to the Governor-General describing his victory won treacherously at Argaum. The Governor-General was highly pleased at the treacherous conduct of his brother. Dating his letter from Fort William, 23rd December, 1803, the Marquess Wellesley wrote to General Wellesley :—

"I received this morning your dispatch of the 30th November. * * * * Although I entirely approved of your armistice, and thought it a most judicious measure, I confess that I prefer your victory to your armistice; * * * *

"I have not yet discovered whether the battle was occasioned by a rupture of the truce on the part of Scindhia; or by Scindhia's refusal to grant to his vakeels the powers which you most properly have required, for the purpose of founding the basis of the negotiation, on the admission of our retention of a part of our conquests; or by Scindhia's re-disavowal of his avowal of Jeswunt Rao Goorparah; or by an accidental rencontre of the armies before the truce had commenced; or by a treacherous junction between Scindhia and the Rajah of Berar. But, *qua cunque via,* a battle is a profit with the Native powers."

The above paragraph, if language has any meaning, clearly shows that the Governor-General did not find any fault with Scindhia's conduct regarding the truce, but, on the contrary, he failed to understand what induced his brother to attack Scindhia

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during the period of the armistice. Anyhow, he congratulated his brother on his successful treachery, because he preferred the victory to the armistice!

After the battle of Argaum, General Wellesley proceeded to besiege and storm Gawilghur. For this purpose, he and Colonel Stevenson marched on from Argaum and arrived at Ellichpoor on the 5th December, and halted there the 6th, in order to establish an hospital for the wounded in the battle of Argaum. Both the divisions encamped before Gawilghur on the 11th December, 1803. The fort was stormed on the 14th.

It was with no difficulty that the fort of Gawilghur was stormed and fell into the hands of the British, whom the Raja of Berar had hardly made any preparations to resist or oppose. However, to the credit of the Fort Commander, he did not betray his trust. He died in its defence.

With the fall of Gawilghur, ended the campaign of General Wellesley in the Deccan. After this, peace was concluded with Scindhia as well as the Raja of Berar.

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CHAPTER XXVIII.

THE WAR IN GUZERAT.

The fertile province of Guzerat was made a part of the Moghul Empire by Akbar the Great. It remained so for nearly two centuries. But when the era of the disruption of the Moghul Empire was inaugurated by Nizam-ul-Mulk, that traitor encouraged and helped the Marathas to conquer Guzerat. It has already been mentioned how the Guicowars had established their supremacy over a portion of Guzerat with their capital at Baroda. Madhavarao Scindhia was rewarded by the British for his faithlessness to the Maratha Confederates and acting as mediator in the Treaty of Salbye, with a portion of Guzerat dependant on the fortress of Baroach. Baroach and its neighbourhood then constituted Scindhia's territory in Guzerat, against which the British directed their hostilities. There was not much difficulty to reduce Baroach and acquire that portion of Guzerat which owned the suzerainty of Dowlat Rao Scindhia. This was very easily accomplished, since the topography of the Baroach fort was well-known to the English.

The Guicowar's capital afforded the base of operations.

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Major-General Wellesley had been entrusted by his brother to direct the operations against Scindhia's territories in Guzerat. Accordingly he wrote to the Governor of Bombay, on the 2nd August, 1803, the measures that should be adopted for the defence of Guzerat, which in non-diplomatic language meant for the invasion of Scindhia's territories in that part of India. He wrote:—

"As his Excellency the Governor General has been pleased to give orders in his letter to you of the 9th July, that the troops in those districts should be placed under my command, I imagine that Major-General Jones will return to Bombay; and as it will be necessary that the officer who will have that extensive charge should be one of character, capacity, and rank, upon reference to the list of the Bombay army, I should think that Sir William Clarke and Colonel Murray are the most fit for such an employment.

"The former already fills a situation from which it would be difficult, if not impossible, to relieve him immediately; and if you approve of the latter, I should recommend him."

Accordingly, Colonel Murray was appointed to the chief command of the forces in Guzerat to act under the orders of General Wellesley. On the 6th August, 1803, the latter wrote to the officer commanding the troops in the territories of Anund Rao Guickwar, Baroda,

"Upon the receipt of this letter, you will commence your operations against Dowlut Rao Scindhia's fort of Baroach.

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"You will not suffer these operations to be interrupted or delayed by any negotiation whatever. You will send the Governor of Bombay a copy of the report which you will transmit to me, of the measures which you will have adopted in consequence of this order."

Baroda, as has been said, was made the base of operations. But it appears from the published records that the Guicowar objected to help the British in their unjust invasion of Scindhia's territories in Guzerat. It was on account of this, that General Wellesley wrote to the Secretary of Government, Bombay, on the 22nd August, 1803, a long letter showing that the Guicowar was bound to assist the British in their wars—whether just or unjust—against any native power of India. A few extracts from the General's letter are given below:—

"Lieut.-Colonel Close has forwarded to me copies of a correspondence between Mr. Duncan and Major Walker, in which an important question is discussed, respecting the nature of the alliance between the Honorable Company and the Guickwar State, and how far the latter is obliged to enter into the war with Scindhia, with whose Government he is in 'close alliance.' * *

"I have seen copies of two treaties between the Company and the Guickwar, by which the latter has agreed to subsidize one Company of artillery, and two battallions of native infantry: both Governments have agreed that there should be true friendship and good understanding between them; * * *

"Although it is not immediately specified, it can never

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have been intended that the Company should protect the Guickwar State, unless the Guickwar should also assist the Company with its forces against the enemies of the British Government. Indeed, I cannot understand the words 'true friendship and good understanding', in any other manner. If it were otherwise, the consequence would be, that the Company would be involved in perpetual war for the protection of the Guickwar State, without any adequate compensation, excepting that of repayment of the expenses incurred; and the connexion between the two Governments would be one not very creditable to the Honorable Company." * *

By concluding the subsidiary alliance with the English, the Guickwar, in common with all other princes who had fallen into the snare of that alliance, was a prisoner in their hands. His objections and his protests were of no avail. Against his will, he had to render them assistance in their unjust and unholy war.

The operations in Guzerat were to be commenced by the siege of Baroach. This was determined upon, because it was a well-known fact that the garrison of the place was weak. In the letter to the Secretary of Government, Bombay, from which extracts have already been given above, General Wellesley wrote:—

"The Governor General has positively ordered, and there is no doubt whatever of the expediency, that operations should be commenced in Guzerat, by the siege of Baroach. This place is of no strength whatever. Major Walker declares that its garrison is weak; if preparations were made

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as suggested in my letter of the 26th of July to Major Walker; and if the attack has been made as ordered in my letter of the 6th of August, it will certainly be in our possession before any of the particular enemies of the Guickwar State, or Jeswant Rao Holkar can know of the war."

But it was also necessary to enter into a campaign of intrigues, before going to war with Scindhia's troops in Guzerat. The inhabitants of Scindhia's territories in Guzerat were mostly composed of Bheels. The English were to intrigue with them. General Wellesley, in his letter dated 2nd August, 1803, to the Governor of Bombay, wrote:—

"The whole range of mountains is in the possession of Bheels, whose exertions would prevent the invasion of any party of marauding horse.

"This fact points out the necessity of cultivating a good understanding with and encouraging the Bheels, so as to attach them to our cause."

He concluded this important letter by urging on the Bombay Government to intrigue with the Bheels. For he wrote:—

"I cannot conclude this letter without requesting that you will urge the gentlemen at Surat to keep on terms with the Bheels: these appear to be a race of the same description with those who inhabit the hills in all parts of India. By conciliation, and refraining from an interference with their concerns, they will prove our best friends, and a contrary line of conduct will make them our worst enemies: it must not be expected that we should involve ourselves in the affairs of these Bheels, or press them for tribute. The

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number of troops I have above detailed will be sufficient for the protection of the valuable territory of which you have got possession: *they will not be sufficient for the subjection even of one of their rajahs;* and from what I have seen of the service in other parts of India, I have no hesitation in declaring my opinion, that, as a measure of economy, it would be better to give up all claims of tribute that the Company might have upon any of those rajahs, than to receive it at the risk of the expense of being obliged to enforce its payment at some future day."

The words put in italics in the above extract clearly convey the idea that the English did not conquer India by the sword, but succeeded in establishing their power by fraud and intrigue. General Wellesley counselled intrigue with the Bheels, in order to make the invasion of Scindhia's territories in Guzerat a success.

For invading Scindhia's territories in Guzerat, Colonel Murray, to whom General Wellesley had delegated his authority, detailed Lieutenant-Colonel Woodington for the task. Lieut.-Colonel Woodington did not find much difficulty in capturing Baroach. On the 25th August, 1803, he wrote to General Wellesley:—

"Agreeably to my communication to you, I marched from Baroda on the 21st, and encamped within two coss of Baroach on the 23rd."

On the morning of the 25th August, the pettah on the western face of the fort of Baroach was taken

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possession of ; and on the 29th August, the fort was captured. On that day, Lieut.-Colonel Woodington wrote to General Wellesley :—

"I have the honor to acquaint you, that at three o'clock, P.M., I stormed the fort of Baroach, and carried it with little loss, although the Arabs made considerable resistance, particularly on our entering the breach."

Again, on the 30th August, he wrote :—

"The breach was reported practicable by the engineer at eleven A.M., when I determined to storm; but delayed it until three o'clock, * * as I thought that a very likely hour to find the enemy off their guard."

The capture of Baroach was thus very easily accomplished. The territories dependent on Baroach yielded an annual revenue of eleven lakhs of rupees. Although the Guickwar rendered so much assistance to the British in their operations against Scindhia in Guzerat, it does not appear that he derived any benefits from them. They certainly did not give him any portion of the territories which they had wrested from Scindhia in Guzerat.

Besides Baroach, Scindhia possessed the fort of Powanghur in Guzerat. On this fort was dependent the district of Champaneer. It was now the intention of Colonel Woodington to capture this fort. By the fall of this fort, Scindhia would be deprived of all his territorial possessions in Guzerat. On the 27th

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August, 1803, Major-General Wellesley wrote to the Governor of Bombay :—

"In respect to the fort of Powanghur, I will send directions that it may be attacked as soon as I shall find that the troops are assembled north of the river Nerbudda, and in a state of equipment fit to undertake that operation.

"It does not appear that Dowlat Rao Scindhia has any territories South of the Nerbudda, bordering upon the sea coast, which would become the object of the operations of the troops in Guzerat."

After the fall of Baroach, Lieut.-Colonel Woodington marched on Powanghur. The fall of this fort was very easily accomplished, for it appears that its defenders were not faithful to their master. Lieut.-Colonel Woodington wrote on the 21st September, 1803, to Colonel Murray, commanding the forces in Guzerat :—

"After a breach had been effected in the wall of the inner fort, as also that another was almost practicable in a tower at the angle of the outer fort, the garrison offered to capitulate on the morning of the 17th, on condition of being protected in their persons and private property. To these terms I agreed, on condition of immediately taking possession of the breach in the inner wall with a Company of Sepoys; they however tacked other stipulations to the Capitulation, *viz.*, that I should agree to pay them the arrears due from Scindhia, and that two of the Commanders of the Guickwar Cavalry with me (amounting to about 300 horse) should sign the agreement. To these latter articles I would on no account agree, and it was not until four P.M. when they

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found from our continuing to batter that I would admit of no delay, that they agreed to the original terms, which were immediately carried into full effect, by their evacuation of the fort and mountain of which we took possession.

"Could they have obtained possession of the upper fort, or Balla Killa, at the top of the mountain, I am inclined to think it utterly impregnable."

Reading the above extracts between the lines, there seems to be every reason to suspect that the defenders of the fort had been bribed to betray their master and hand over the fort to the British. Gold supplied the key to unlock the gate of Powanghur and admit the troops under the leadership of the British.

The war against Scindhia in Guzerat ceased with the fall of Powanghur, for that prince had no more territories in Guzerat. The British deprived him now of all the possessions in Guzerat which had been held out as a bait to Madhavarao Scindhia for his helping them out of their difficulties and concluding the Treaty of Salbye.

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CHAPTER XXIX.

THE WAR IN ORISSA.

The English under Clive had obtained from the Moghul Emperor, the Dewany of Orissa. But their possession in Orissa was a small tract of land in the northern portion of that province. The greater part of Orissa was under the sovereignty of the Bhonslahs of Nagpoor. It is not necessary to mention how the Marathas got possession of the province by expelling the Mahomedans. An account of that will be found in Grant Duff's History of the Marathas.

Orissa was not a *terra incognita* to the British. The natives of England had for more than a century been in possession of factories and trading posts in Orissa before the Marathas had conquered the province.* It appears that on the conquest of that

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* Mr. Beames writes :—"To Balasore belongs the honor of containing the first settlement made by our countrymen in any part of the Bengal Presidency. By a firman, dated February 2nd, 1634, the Emperor Shah Jahan granted them permission to establish a factory at Pipli on the Subanrekha. * * In 1640 through the intervention of Mr. Boughton, a Surgeon who had obtained great influence over several members of the Royal Family by curing them of various diseases, the English obtained permission to establish

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province by the Marathas, the English had suffered some loss in their trade. So when the Dewany of Orissa was granted to Clive and his compatriots by the Moghuls, it was proposed to send an expedition against the Marathas. But then the latter were in the zenith of their power and the British anticipated disasters if they were to cross blades with them. So even the 'daring' Clive considered discretion to be the better part of valor, and the idea of an expedition against the Marathas was given up. The Court of Directors in 1764 expressed their great pleasure at learning that the proposed expedition against the Marathas in Balasore and Cuttack had been given up, as 'conquests are not our aim.' Well, this reminds one of the expression of the disappointed fox in the fable of the grapes being sour!

The British, however, lived on good terms with the Marathas. The Directors of the East India Company in 1767 agreed to pay to the Marathas all arrears

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factories at Balasore and Hughli. In consequence of this permission they applied to the Nawab who granted them 12 batis (a bati is 20 bighas) of land near the village of Balasore which was then rising into some importance as a port. The settlement was called Barabati (*i.e.* twelve batis) from its extent, and is at present the principal quarter of the modern town of Balasore, and the residence of the wealthiest merchants." (*Journal of the Asiatic Society of Bengal* for 1883).

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of *chauth* on condition of the cession of Orissa, the Dewany of which, as said above, was granted to the Company. Negotiations were in consequence opened with the Marathas to this end. A vakil, one Udaipuri Gosain, was appointed by the Raja of Berar to treat with the Bengal Council, and the amount was fixed at 13 lakhs of rupees. This is the version of the English. But the Vakil declared that he had no authority to deliver up the province to them. They then could have gone to war with the Marathas had they the pluck and courage to do so. But like the sly fox, they were merely watching their opportunity and it would also seem intriguing with the people of Orissa, ever since their rebuff in 1767. In his "Notes on the History of Orissa," published in the *Journal of the Asiatic Society of Bengal* for 1883, Mr. J. Beames, writing of the prosperous condition of the natives of Orissa under the rule of the Marathas, said :—

"A seer of rice was sold for 15 gandas or about 70 seers to the rupee. * * * Opium cost a *pan* of cowries per masha, salt 14 karas per seer. The advantages of low prices were, however, much counterbalanced by the capricious exactions of the rulers. Although they seem to have had the sense not to drive away the trade by oppressing foreigners, yet upon the natives of the province itself they had no mercy. It was dangerous to be rich, or at least to display any amount of wealth, lest the attention of the Marathas should be called to the fact, and plunder and

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extortion follow as a matter of course. *It is not surprising therefore that when the English appeared on the scene, the Marathas were left to fight their own battles, quite unsupported by the people. Indeed, they seem to have been so conscious of their unpopularity as never to have attempted to enlist the sympathies of the Oriyas on their behalf. Had they done so, the turbulent Rajas of the hills and the sea-coast might have given us a great deal of trouble and enabled the Marathas to hold out for some time.*"

It is not necessary to consider how far the allegations of cruelties and atrocities said to have been practised by the Marathas on the natives of Orissa are founded on facts and not merely the fabrications of the fertile imaginative brains of English historians and writers.* But the sentences put in italics in the

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* Had the Maratha rule been cruel and atrocious, the people could not have been so prosperous and contented as even this English writer admits. In those days famines were unknown in Orissa. But no sooner had the British made their appearance on the scene than we read of nothing but famines almost every fifth year in that province. Even Mr. Beames writes :—

"Cuttack now begins to be noticeable as it is *at frequent intervals throughout the early years of British rule as a place in constant want of supplies and always on the verge of famine.* On 1st December 1803 an urgent call is made for fifteen thousand maunds of rice from Balasore. Again on the 1st June 1804 Captain Morgan is ordered to warn all pilgrims of the great scarcity of rice and cowries at Cuttack, and to endeavour to induce them to supply themselves with provisions before entering the province."

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above extract afford strong grounds to suspect that the English had been intriguing with the Oriyas against the Marathas. There was hardly any fighting in Orissa. No ultimatum, as has been said over and over again in he previous chapters, was ever sent

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The economical condition of Orissa was never so bad under the Marathas. The people never suffered the pangs of hunger or died of starvation.

The Governor-General in Council, as was usual, wrote to the Secret Committee of the Court of Directors on the 31st October 1803:—"The inhabitants of the province of Cuttack afforded every assistance to the British troops on their march, and expressed the utmost satisfaction at the prospect of being speedily relieved from the oppressions to which they had uniformly been subjected by the Maratha Government, and of being placed under the protection of the British power."

The poor people were soon undeceived. The substitution of the European for the Maratha came to be regarded by them as jumping out of the frying pan into the fire. The same writer who has been so often quoted above (Mr. J. Beames) says:—"Well aware of our ignorance of the country, they all with one accord abstained from helping us in any way, no open resistance was ventured upon, but all stolidly sat aloof—papers were hidden, information withheld, boats, bullocks and carts sent out of the way, the Zemindars who were ordered to go into Cuttack to settle for their estates did not go, and on searching for them at their homes could not be found, were reported as absent, on a journey, no one knew where. But if from ignorance the English officers committed any mistake, then life sud-

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by the British to the Maratha Confederates. The latter had no time or opportunity to prepare for the war, whereas the English had been making every war-like preparation since many years past. It would also seem that although the British did not get Orissa by acting on the Machiavellian maxims in 1767, for the Vakil Udaipuri Gosain was more than a match for the perfidious servants of the Company, yet the latter never gave up hopes of someday possessing it. With this object in view, they would seem to have been intriguing with the natives of that province.

The Marquess Wellesley's instructions to the officer who was entrusted with carrying on the war in Orissa, would also lend support to the hypothesis that the British had been intriguing with the Oriyas and their acquisition of Orissa was accomplished more by fraud and intrigues than by conquest or straightforward means.

Lieut.-Colonel Campbell was entrusted to carry on military operations in Orissa. The Marquess Wellesley wrote to him on the 3rd August, 1803:—

"You have been apprized by my Military Secretary of my general views and intentions, with respect to the occupation of the province of Cuttack.

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denly returned to the dull inert mass, and complaints were loud and incessant."

How does this compare with the Governor-General's statement to the Secret Committee of the Court of Directors?

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"You have been informed that a force will be detached from Bengal to act under your command, together with the force which you may be enabled to collect from the Northern Circars, in consequence of the orders signified to you by my Military Secretary. The force from Bengal will embark in the course of a day or two, and I have directed returns of it to accompany these instructions.

"You were directed to assemble at Ganjam from the division of the army under your command, a force of not less than fifteen hundred native infantry, and to increase that force, if practicable, consistently with the tranquility of the Northern Circars.

"With the force, which you have assembled under those orders, and with the detachment from Bengal, you will enter the province of Cuttack and proceed to Juggernaut.

"In passing the frontier of the Maratha territory you will use every possible means to conciliate the inhabitants, for which purpose you will issue the proclamation,* which accompanies this despatch. You will also promise protection to the persons and property of all those who shall remain in their possessions, and shall not attempt to act against the British authority, declaring that no person shall be molested excepting such as may appear in arms. * * * *

"On your arrival at Jaggernaut, you will employ every possible precaution to preserve the respect due to the Pagoda, and to the religious prejudices of the Brahmins and pilgrims. You will furnish the Brahmins with such guards as shall afford perfect security to their persons, rites and ceremonials, and to the sanctity of the religious edifices, and

* Similar to the proclamation issued by General Harris when entering Mysore.

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you will strictly enjoin those under your command to observe your orders on this important subject, with the utmost degree of accuracy and vigilance.

"The Brahmins are supposed to derive considerable profits from the duties levied on pilgrims, it will not, therefore, be advisable at the present moment to interrupt the system which prevails for the collection of those duties. * * * *

"You will assure the Brahmins at the Pagoda of Jaggernaut, that they will not be required to pay any other revenue or tribute to the British Government than that which they may have been in the habit of paying to the Maratha government, and that they will be protected in the exercise of their religious duties. * * * *

"I have reason to believe that a considerable proportion of the province of Cuttack is occupied by chieftains or zemindars who have been enabled by the weakness of the Maratha government to render themselves independent of the Maratha power, or who yield to it a partial obedience. Considerable tracts of country contiguous to that province are also possessed by chieftains, who acknowledge no superior authority, or who are merely tributary to the Maratha State. I deem it necessary that such of those chieftains or zemindars as are subjects of the Maratha government, and have revolted, should be required to acknowledge subjection to the British power. With other chieftains who may possess means of embarrassing your progress, it may be advisable to negotiate engagements on terms favourable to their interests, without requiring their absolute submission to the British authority."

From the above, the intriguing nature of the Company's Servants is quite evident. The Governor-General relied on intrigues rather than arms for the

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acquisition of the province of Orissa. The English were not entering that province as conquerors, but as friends to deliver its inhabitants from the alleged tyrannies and oppressions of the Marathas. To gain their object, they did not scruple to act on the Machiavellian maxims. That Italian thinker wrote that

"the sagacious politicians will always respect religion, even if he have no belief in it, since there have been frequent proofs that through inculcating it even by craft, much valor has been roused for the defence of the country."

The very pious "Christian" Governor-General acted on this maxim and so instructed the officer who was to carry on military operations in Orissa to show every respect to the idolatrous practices of the Hindoos at Juggernaut.

Machiavelli wrote:—

"Men are all the readier to throw themselves into your arms, the less you appear disposed to compel them, and the more you show yourself humane and familiar with them, the less they dread you as regards their liberty."

It was on this maxim then, that the Governor-General instructed the commandant of the Forces in Orissa to intrigue with the chieftains and natives of that province. So it was not the atrocities, tyrannies and oppressions alleged against the Marathas which paved the way to the acquisition of Orissa by the

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British as the intrigues of the latter on Machiavellian maxims. Accordingly when they

"appeared on the scene, the Marathas were left to fight their own battles, quite unsupported by the people."

It was not Lieut.-Colonel Campbell who went to acquire Orissa, but Lieut.-Colonel Harcourt.* He marched from Ganjam on the 8th September, 1803, at the head of the 1st Madras Fusileers and two Madras regiments and took possession of Manickpatam on the 14th and of the City of Jaggernaut, known also as Pooree, on the 18th September, 1803. He accomplished this without fighting and bloodshed. On the same date, he wrote to Captain Armstrong, who was on the staff of the Governor-General:—

"I beg you will be pleased to state to his Excellency the Most Noble the Governor-General, that we have this day taken possession of the city of Jaggernaut.

"Upon application from the chief Brahmins of the Pagoda, I have afforded them guards (of Hindus) and a most satisfactory confidence is shewn by the Brahmins, priests, and officers of the Pagoda, and by the inhabitants of Jaggernaut, both in their present situation, and in the future protection of the British Government."

So the intrigues on the Machiavellian maxims produced the desired result.

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* The former having been seized with an illness which threatened his life, Lieutenant-Colonel Harcourt was appointed to act in his stead.

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A detachment was also sent from Calcutta to carry on their operations on the Machiavellian maxims in the northern portion of Orissa under the sovereignty of the Raja of Berar. This detachment was 1,000 strong and was under the command of Captain Morgan and Lieut. Broughton and sailed for Balasore. Another detachment was sent under Colonel Fergusson to Jellasore to protect the Bengal Frontier. Captain Morgan's detachment, writes Mr. J. Beames,

"arrived in three ships, and landed at Jampada near Gabgaon a village adjoining old Balasore on the east, and almost three miles below the present town. They were in want of provisions, which were supplied to them by Prahlad Nayak, Zamindar of old Balasore. They then advanced along the bank of the river, and owing probably to the difficult nature of the ground, were not opposed by the Marathas till they got close to Balighat just below Barabati. Here a band of horsemen bore down on them, and in the skirmish which ensued, one European soldier was killed. The English then rushed forward and attacked the Maratha fort, which stood on the site of the salt gola, and soon took possession of it. The Marathas appear to have made but a faint resistance, and quickly disappeared. Immediately after this, a drum was beaten in all the bazars announcing that the English had taken possession of the province and would protect all who behaved themselves peaceably. * * * *

"The date of the capture of Balasore is 21st September, 1803."

The news of the capture of Balasore reached Lieut.-Colonel Harcourt before he arrived at Cuttack.

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He wrote a letter dated Burpoorshuttumpore, 25 miles south of Cuttack, 3rd October, 1803, congratulating Captain Morgan on his success.

After taking possession of Jaggernaut Lieut.-Colonel Harcourt directed his attention to capture Cuttack. In the despatch of the Governor-General in Council to the Secret Committee of the Court of Directors dated October 31, 1803, it is stated that

> "the inundated state of the country prevented the march of the army under the command of Lieutenant-Colonel Harcourt from Juggernaut, until the 24th of September. During the first day's march, the advanced corps of the army were several times engaged with parties of the enemy's troops who were repulsed with loss.
>
> "An action subsequently took place between an advanced detachment of the British troops and a party of the enemy near Muckundpore in which the latter was defeated with considerable loss.
>
> "No further resistance was opposed to the progress of the British army until its arrival at Cuttack on the 10th of October, but the inundated state of the country and the rise of the rivers greatly retarded the march of the troops.
>
> "The town of Cuttack was immediately occupied by the British troops without opposition."

Operations were then begun for the reduction of the Fort of Cuttack, named Barabutty. In his despatch to Captain Armstrong, Military Secretary to the Governor-General, dated Cuttack, Octr. 15th, 1803, Lieut.-Colonel Harcourt described the manner

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in which the reduction of that fort was brought about. He wrote

"that the fort of Barabutty had been taken by assault by a part of the troops under my command, directed to perform this service under the orders of Lieuenant-Colonel Clayton, of the 20th Bengal Regiment. * * * *

"On the night of the 12th a spot was fixed on for a twelve-pounder battery, distant about 500 yards from the outer gate of the fort. This battery was completed on the night of the 13th, and the twelve-pounder placed in it, together with two howitzers and two six-pounders, the whole of which opened their fire on the morning of the 14th. By eleven o'clock in the forenoon most of the defences on the south face of the fort, against which our fire was directed, were taken off, the enemy's guns silenced and every appearance promised success : upon which I directed Lieutenant-Colonel Clayton to advance with one six-pounder, and a party of artillery men, 200 Europeans from his Majesty's 22nd, and the Madras European regiment, and 400 sepoys from the 20th Bengal, and the 9th and 19th regiments of Madras Native Infantry. The party had to pass over a narrow bridge, and under a very heavy but ill-directed fire of musketry from the fort, to which they were exposed for forty minutes. They at length succeeded in blowing open the wicket, * * * Having once accomplished this, the party entered singly, and although they met with considerable resistance whilst entering the fort, and passing two other gates, the British troops were soon completely victorious. * * * *

"The fort of Barabutty is of considerable strength, and with the exception of the bridge over which our party passed, is inaccessible, as it is surrounded by a ditch from 35 to 135 feet broad, and 20 feet depth of water in it."

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That such a strong fort could have been so easily reduced by the British officers, shows that there were traitors among those who had been entrusted with its defence.

With the reduction of the Fort of Barrabutty, ended all military operations in Orissa. But we have not as yet fully dealt with the doings of Captain Morgan. That officer after occupying Balasore, detached, on the 30th of September, two companies under the Command of Lieutenant Slye to Soroh, twenty miles south of Balasore, for the purpose of dislodging a party of the enemy stationed near that place, and of opening the communication in the direction of Cuttack.

On the 1st of October the detachment under the Command of Lieutenant Slye attacked and defeated the enemy which was posted at a village a short distance north of Soroh, and the troops of the enemy stationed at Soroh subsequently retreated to the Southward. The detachment under Lieutenant Slye having been reinforced by another company from Balasore occupied Soroh on the 3rd of October without further opposition.

On the 4th of October the whole of the detachment under the command of Lieut.-Colonel Fergusson, arrived at Balasore without any opposition.

On the 10th of October the detachment under

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the command of Lieut.-Colonel Fergusson marched from Balasore in consequence of orders from the Governor-General, directing that officer to proceed for the purpose of forming a junction with the army under the command of Lieut.-Colonel Harcourt at Cuttack; and on the 15th of October that detachment arrived near Budruck, a village situated near halfway between Balasore and Cuttack.

According to Mr. Beames, the first efforts of these officers

"were to learn the geography of the Moharbhanj and Nilgiri Hills, especially the passes and to open communications with the Rajas of those two states. Spies were sent into Moharbhanj and Nilgiri to keep a watch on the chiefs, and passports were to be granted to their vakeels or representatives should they desire to visit Cuttack.

"Soroh was abandoned and the detachment under Lieutenant Slye marched to Jajpore in November. * * * * * The Moharbhanj Rani was at this time, apparently half afraid to come in, and half disposed to be turbulent. Harcourt writes frequent letters to him (? her), and enjoins on Morgan the necessity of extremely conciliatory conduct to him (? her). * * * * Moharbhanj, however, does not appear to have quieted down, and two companies of infantry one from Balasore and one from Jellasore were sent to Hariharpur 'to promote the peace and transquility of the Mohurbundge district.' Further instructions are to the effect following :—

'Having cause to believe that the Rani of Mohurbundge

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and her adopted son Te-Koit* are both desirous of the protection of the British Government being extended to them you will direct the officer proceeding to Huriharpore in command of a detachment, to conduct himself towards the Ranee and Te-Koit, or their vakeels with every mark of friendly attention. He may open any necessary communication with them, but *you will be pleased to enjoin him to avoid committing himself by any promises or agreement that may be construed by them as binding on the British authorities in Cuttack.*' "

The sentence put in italics needs no comment. It clearly indicates the perfidious character of the Company's servants. They obtained a portion of territories dependent on Moharbhanj by fraud.

By the capitulation of Sambhalpur on the 12th January, 1804, the whole of Orissa then forming part of the Maratha Empire came into the hands of the British. The acquisition of Orissa by them can hardly be called 'a conquest.' The Oriyas at least can certainly by no means be designated as a conquered people.

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* Te-Koit is Tikait, one bearing the tika (tilaka) or mark of sovereignty, and is the usual title of the heir-apparent to a throne.

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CHAPTER XXX.

ACQUISITION OF BUNDLEKHAND.

The British came to possess the province of Bundlekhand by the supplemental articles to the Treaty of Bassein drawn up under date 16th December, 1803. That province belonged to the Peishwa and he was induced to part with it in lieu of Savanoor and Benkapoor in the Southern Maratha Country, Oolpar in the neighbourhood of Surat—all of which were included in the cessions made by the Treaty of Bassein. From its situation in the neighbourhood of their position on the Jumna Bundlekhand was extremely important to the British. But the province could not be obtained without expelling certain chieftains who, though tributary to the Peishwa, were averse to place themselves under the yoke of the British. Hence for the acquisition of the province, an expedition was necessary. From Allahabad, a detachment of troops under the command of Lieut.-Colonel Powell crossed the Jumna and entered Bundelkhand on the 6th September, 1803. The detachment under Colonel Powell could not have so easily accomplished the occupation of Bundelkhand, had not a soldier of fortune, named Gosain

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Himmut Bahadur, offered his services to the British and shown the way in which they could easily acquire the province. The offer of this man (or rather traitor) was accepted and he joined the British with a large body of troops, on the 16th September. There was no difficulty in reducing the petty chieftains and their forts in the province. But the nominal ruler of the province, Shamshere Bahadur, still held out and so the united forces of the British and Himmat Bahadur crossed the river Cane on the 10th October and on the 13th found the army of Shamshere Bahadur drawn up to oppose them. There was a battle fought, but Shamshere Bahadur was easily defeated, and he evacuated the province by his retreat and crossing the river Betwa.

The acquisition of Bundelkhand by the British cannot be looked upon as a conquest by them. It was ceded to them by the Peishwa in compliance with the articles of the Treaty of Bassein.

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CHAPTER XXXI.

THE WAR IN THE NORTH.

In the North, General Lake was entrusted to invade Scindhia's dominions. Madhavarao Scindhia had acquired the fertile provinces situated in the valley between the Ganges on the East and the Jumna on the West, comprising Agra, Aligarh and Delhi. He had placed De Boigne in civil and military administration of his newly acquired territories. On the death of Madhoji Scindhia and on the departure of De Boigne for Europe, M. Perron held charge of these territories. Scindhia, of course, held these territories under the nominal authority of the Moghul Emperor of Dehli. Lake, as said before, was directed to secure the person of the Dehli Emperor and to wrest from Scindhia all his possessions in Hindustan. Long before the formal declaration of the war on Scindhia, the British had been busily engaged in conspiring and intriguing with Scindhia's tributaries and subjects. So it was an easy affair for Lake to capture Scindhia's strongholds in Hindustan, and walk over, as it were, to Delhi and secure the person of the Emperor.

Major-General Wellesley had been authorized to

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conclude peace with, or declare war upon, Scindhia and the Raja of Berar. As said before, that gallant General preferred war to peace and his memorandum of the 6th August, 1803, set forth the pretexts for unjustly going to war with Scindhia. General Wellesley's Memorandum of the 6th did not reach the Governor-General till the 23rd August, 1803. On its receipt, he wrote a secret letter to Lieut.-General Lake, dated Fort William, August 24th, 1803, forwarding copies of General Wellesley's Memorandum. The Governor-General wrote :—

"The documents now transmitted will, however, sufficiently indicate to your Excellency the necessity of prosecuting, with the utmost activity and despatch, the system of military operations and political arrangements described in my several letters addressed to Your Excellency previously to the 10th instant.

"Your Excellency will, therefore, proceed in the war against Dowlut Rao Scindhia without delay or interruption, unless you should receive official advices of the conclusion of peace in the Deccan, or unless Major-General Wellesley should signify to Your Excellency his desire that offensive operations should cease in the north-western countries of Hindustan."

Again, on the 26th August, the Governor-General wrote another secret letter to the Commander-in-Chief in India. He wrote :

"I have the honor to enclose for Your Excellency's notice copy of a letter received this day from Major-General Wel-

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lesley, together with its enclosures, by a reference to which Your Excellency will observe that hostilities must have commenced against Scindhia and the Raja of Berar in the Deccan, at the close of the first week of this month."

Lord Lake was fully prepared for the war against Scindhia. On the 7th of August, he marched from Cawnpore and reached the Company's frontier on the 28th. He lost no time in pushing on to and invading Scindhia's territories. On the 29th August, 1803, without much difficulty he occupied Coel, the frontier town of Scindhia. This is not to be wondered at when we remember that the European officers and men in the employ of Scindhia betrayed their master. The conspiracies and intrigues which the Governor-General had set afoot, were now bearing their desired effect. On the day of the occupation of Coel, *i.e.*, 29th August, 1803, General Lake wrote a "Private" letter to the Marquess Wellesley, in which he said:—

"I am convinced the day has had a most wonderful effect upon the minds of the natives, who always thought M. Perron invincible; indeed I have every reason to believe that some of his confederates left him the moment they heard of our approach, particularly the Jauts, and few Sikhs which are reported to have been with him; and I think most of the others have gone to their homes, and never will encounter us again. * * * * * Six officers of Perron's second brigade are just come in, having resigned the service even before they knew of the proclamation."

Could there be any doubt after reading the above,

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that there was no hope for Scindhia to successfully oppose the British since his camp was reeking with traitors? General Lake did not mention in his "private" letter, that the conspiracies and intrigues which the Governor-General had set afoot were successful in detaching the European officers and men from Scindhia's service and also betraying Scindhia.

After occupying Coel, General Lake turned his attention to capture the fort of Alighur. Dating his letter marked "Private", from Camp at Coel, Sept. 1, 1803, General Lake wrote to the Marquess Wellesley :—

> "I have not yet moved from hence, nor am I in possession of the fort of Allyghur; *my object is to get the troops out of the fort by bribery, which I flatter myself will be done*. My reason for gaining it this way, proceeds from a wish to expedite matters, and save the troops. The place is extremely strong, and if regularly besieged, will take a month at least. If attempted to be gained by a *coup de main,* I think we must lose men, but I am at present adverse to this mode of attack, * * Therefore, if by a little money, I can save the lives of these valuable men, Your Lordship will not think I have acted wrong, or been too lavish of cash."

General Lake, however, did not succeed in getting the troops out of the fort by bribery. But it is within the bounds of possibility, nay probability, that a large number of Scindhia's troops within the Fort of Allyghur had been seduced by the British to be-

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tray Scindhia's interests and turn traitors. Although these troops did not apparently desert Scindhia's colors, they were not faithful to their master. Man is naturally weak and therefore beautiful is the utterance of Christ in which he taught his followers to daily pray to God, "Father, lead us not into temptations, but deliver us from evils." What are we to think of the followers of Christ in India who led non-Christians into temptations by bribing them to betray their sovereigns? To the credit of Scindhia's non-Christian subjects, it must be said that most of them did not prove faithless to him and were not bought over by gold as were the Christian officers and men in Scindhia's employ.

When General Lake perceived that it was useless to try to seduce Scindhia's troops to betray the Fort at Allyghur, he determined to capture it by assault. It was not difficult for him to do so. Some of those European officers and men who had deserted Scindhia were only too ready to betray their late master whose salt they had eaten for so many years. Amongst these faithless men there was one named Lucan, who pointed out the weak points of the Fort at Allyghur.

Dating his letter from Head Quarters, Camp Allyghur, Sept. 4th, 1803, General Lake wrote to the Marquess Wellesley :—

"It is with inexpressible satisfaction that I have the

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honor to report to Your Lordship, the capture of the Fort of Allyghur this morning by assault.

"Having spent some days in fruitless endeavours to save the unnecessary effusion of blood, on finding that the natives persisted obstinately in their determination of resistance, and rejected every overture I made, I found myself under the necessity of determining on some decisive measure, and after maturely considering the probability of success with the obstacles that opposed us, I judged it preferable to carry it by assault, than to lose time by the slower operations of a siege."

It is questionable if the gallant General would have determined on an assault, had he not possessed the services of a European traitor once in the employ of Scindhia, ready to betray his late master. Regarding the services rendered by this traitor, General Lake wrote:—

"I feel I shall be wanting in justice to the merits of Mr. Lucan, an officer, a native of Great Britain, who lately quitted the service of Scindhia, to avoid serving against his country, were I not to recommend him to Your Lordship's particular attention. He gallantly undertook to lead Colonel Monson to the gate, and point out the road through the fort, which he effected in a most gallant manner, and Colonel Monson has reported having received infinite benefit from his services. If you deem him worthy of any mark of Your Excellency's favor, it will afford me great satisfaction, if his services are rewarded by Government."

Scindhia's troops, however, fought as bravely as possible. The Commander-in-Chief felt bound to bear

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testimony to their courage. He wrote to the Governor-General :—

"As I told Your Lordship in my letter of the 1st instant, I had tried every method to prevail upon these people to give up the fort, and offered a very large sum of money, but they were determined to hold out, which they did most obstinately, and I may say most gallantly."

But the bravery and courage of Scindhia's troops were of no avail. They were no match for the fraud and underhand practices of the Europeans, since the gold of the latter had raised traitors in their ranks. So the fall of Allygurh was very easily effected.

With the fall of Allygurh, M. Perron left Scindhia's Service. Although an adventurer, he seems to have possessed more sense of honor than any other European employe of Scindhia, for he did not betray his master. Regarding this, Mr. Mill (vi. 352) writes :—

"Perron might have received a large sum of money, had he bargained for his own retirement, and transferred to the English any considerable portion of the military resources with which he was intrusted. Perron retired, without bargaining at all : and, although he had the greatest cause of resentment against his employer, he left, without transferring to his enemies the smallest portion of the resources with which he was intrusted."

But the same cannot be said of the other European adventurers. The reason for Perron's

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leaving Scindhia was not so much ill usage which it is alleged he received at the hand of his employer, as the disgust with which he was filled at the treachery and ingratitude of his European comrades. According to the Governor-General,

"M. Perron stated, that his reason for retiring proceeded from his having received intelligence that his successor had been appointed; and was actually on his way to take possession of his new charge. M. Perron also observed, that *the treachery and ingratitude of his European officers convinced him that further resistance to the British arms was useless.*"*

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* But, writes a correspondent in the *Pioneer* of 4th September, 1903, on the occasion of the centenary of Aligarh.

"The Fort of Aligarh, lying near the city of Koel, half-way between Agra and Delhi, was strongly held by M. Perron, the French adventurer commanding Scindhia's forces. This M. Perron, whose house, by the way, still stands at Aligarh, administered the district and drew his revenues therefrom, having succeeded the Savoyard, M. de Boigne, one of the most remarkable men who ever served in Hindustan.

'As Lake advanced from Cawnpore, in August 1803, M. Perron mustered his forces and determined to make a stand at the Fort; but in spite of the strength of his position he seems to have behaved in an odd fashion. He handed the command over to a subordinate, one Pedron, enjoining him on his honour as a Frenchman to hold out to the last and himself retired to Hathras to await the issue of events. Lake had with him five hundred men of H. M.'s 76th

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After the fall of Allygurh and the desertion of Perron and other European adventurers, it was very easy for General Lake to march on to Dehli. He left Aligarh and marched on to, and occupied Kaunga without any resistance. It seems that he bribed the

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Regiment of Foot, three battalions of Sepoys and a few guns. The attack was quick and decisive. Lieutenant Lucan led a storming party against the front gate which was rushed and carried, though at the cost of many lives, and the evening of the 4th September found Lake in possession of a stronghold, which all Hindustan had deemed impregnable. There was no vain-glorying in his despatch, which said: "From the extraordinary strength of the place, in my opinion, British valour never shone more conspicuous."

'This blow, followed in less than one month by the victory of Laswarry, settled the fate of Northern India and disposed of Scindhia and M. Perron, who was now regarded by his former friends as a traitor. His conduct had certainly been strange. Perhaps he lost his head in those days of Lake's advance; perhaps, for all the strength of his Fort, he foresaw the end. Anyhow, it is asserted that he had "savings" to a considerable amount invested in the funds of the East India Company.

'The breaches made by Lake's guns and the front gate that Lucan battered have long ago been rebuilt, and the Fort slumbers idly through the tireless days like an old greybeard by the way side when his life's work is done, resting and waiting. Local tradition says—and solemnly the chowkidar, the solitary householder there, will assert it —that the boom of guns is often heard at night.

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people to betray the fort. His 'private' letter, dated September 8th, 1803, to the Governor-General, from Kaunga, throws much light on the manner in which secret service money was freely expended to corrupt people. He wrote:—

"We arrived here (Kaunga) this morning, and found a very strong little fort, which would have caused delay and trouble had not the troops evacuated it the day after the fall of Alighur, when they declared they would not wait for our attack; I trust this idea prevails throughout the country. * * * *

"I think when you hear the SECRET manner in which things have been conducted you will be much pleased, it is quite a new work in the army, and has succeeded hitherto wonderfully well. I think to be very near Delhi in three more marches."

The ease with which the people could often be bribed shows their degeneracy and lack of patriotism.

There was no difficulty to march on to Dehli. It was not the wish of the Governor-General that General Lake should proceed to Dehli. The former had urged him to concentrate a force between Agra and Koil and to advance a force from Etawah against Gwalior and also to advance against Saharanpur from Amroa. Had the Governor-General's plan been carried out, Scindhia would have been utterly crushed, for then the war would have been carried to the very heart and capital of his dominions. But General Lake was not prepared for this. His plan was not

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to attack Gwalior but move on to Dehli. The reason for General Lake's moving on to Dehli instead of attacking Gwalior appears to be that he expected help from the Moghul Emperor at Dehli and thus was almost certain of the success of his undertaking. It has already been mentioned before, that the Governor-General had opened intrigues with Shah Alum and means had been found to convey to him the Governor-General's letter. To this letter a secret answer from Shah Alum was received by General Lake on the 29th August, 1803, *i.e.*, the day on which Koil was taken. Hence, the Commander-in-Chief altered the plan which the Governor-General had ordered him to execute. It is the testimony of all historians that Lake was no tactician or brilliant and brave general. He depended more on good luck and bribery and other questionable means which he designated as "the secret manner for conducting things" for his success than upon his ability as a sound general. In Ireland, Lake had been a failure as a general. Mr. Stead (Review of Reviews, July, 1898) writes:—

"The last act of the 'Rebellion' of 1798 was the sudden and unexpected arrival of Colonel Humbert with three ships and 1,000 Frenchmen at Killala, which they occupied August 22nd. Humbert, taking with him 800 of his own men, who were joined by 1,500 Irish, marched westward, and on the 28th attacked and defeated General Lake, who had 6,000 men under his command, at Castlebar. The rout of the

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British troops was so precipitate that the Races of Castlebar became a byeword from that day in Connaught."

This disaster was retrieved by Lord Cornwallis.

One would have thought that General Lake would, after such a signal failure as that mentioned above, have been the last man to be appointed to the responsible office of the Commander-in-Chief in India. If Lake was a failure as a general, in Ireland he nevertheless loyally carried out the policy of the Government of the day. Mr. Stead, in his Centenary of 1798, calls General Lake "a truculent ruffian." It was the policy of the Government under Pitt in England, and his representative Lord Castlereagh in Ireland to provoke the Irish to rebellion. "Lord Castlereagh," writes Mr. Stead, "found in General Lake a pliant instrument for his designs."

Lake's appointment in India was to be attributed to the fact that Lord Castlereagh whose "pliant instrument" he was in Ireland, afterwards succeeded Dundas as the chief for the affairs of India. Moreover, Pitt was still the Prime Minister whose policy to provoke the Irish to revolt was loyally carried out by Lake by "free rape" of the native women of Ireland.

In his letter dated September 12th, 1803, General Lake stated his reasons for moving on to Dehli, instead of attacking Gwalior and thus carrying out the

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instructions of the Governor-General. He wrote to the Governor-General :—

"Allow me to state my reasons for coming on to Delhi, which were as follow—I had certain information that Louis was making all the use possible of the King's name, and of his royal prerogative, and I thought it most probable that many persons with the concealed design of taking advantage of the present times, but absolutely in obedience to the King's mandate, might either join Louis or spread over the Company's provinces for the sake of plunder. Another reason for coming to Delhi, was considering the character of Mr. Louis more active, and perhaps more zealous than Mr. Perron and considering also his personal connection with the Sikhs, I was decidedly of opinion, that the crushing of these political intrigues, and the subversion of his French connection were primary objects, and that nothing would be so likely to accomplish the above objects as the sudden appearance of the army at the capital of Delhi, * * * Another consideration was, that if the enemy were active, vigorous, and enterprising, our provinces are much at his mercy; the movement of my army to Agra might save the lower part of the Doab, but the upper part, together with Rohilcund, would have been exposed to the depredations of Louis's detachment, and as he possessed Saharanpore, and probably expected co-operation from the Rohillas, he would probably have overrun Rohilcund with greater facility than Perron could carry his depredations to any considerable extent."

But the real reason which prompted him to move on to Delhi, as said above, was his successful intrigue with Shah Alum. Delhi was not entered till a battle

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was fought with M. Louis Borguin who was in command of Scindhia's troops at Delhi. As was to be expected, Lake was victorious. The victory could not have been obtained but for the treachery of some of the troops under Louis. It is probable that Shah Alum, who had been intriguing with the British, had also taken steps to corrupt the troops under Louis. Anyhow Lake got the credit of defeating Louis. The battle was fought on the 11th September, 1803. On the same date at half-past seven P.M. General Lake wrote to the Governor-General:—

"I have the satisfaction to inform Your Lordship, that after a march of eighteen miles this morning, I learnt that the enemy in great force under Mr. Louis, had crossed the Jumna from Delhi, with the intention of attacking us.

"When we had encamped, we found our outposts were attacked by a body of the enemy. On reconnoitring to our front, I found that the enemy's whole army were drawn up in order of battle. I immediately ordered out the whole line, and advanced to attack them in front.

"The enemy opposed to us a tremendous fire from a numerous artillery, which was uncommonly well served, and caused us considerable loss in officers and men, but I have the satisfaction to add, that our advance under a most heavy cannonade, and actual charge of the enemy, at about one hundred paces distant, caused a most precipitate retreat, and left in our possession the whole of their artillery.

"The cavalry pursued the fugitives to the Jumna, making great havock, and numbers were drowned in attempting to cross. * * * *

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"The whole army was under arms from three this morning till this moment."

Reading the above, it is impossible for us not to suspect that the ease with which Lake obtained his victory was mainly due to the intrigue which had been opened with Shah Alum, who must have taken steps to corrupt the army opposed to Lake.

The fall of Delhi was now accomplished and General Lake went to pay his respects to the Titular Emperor on the 16th September, 1803, who was induced to formally make over the empire of his ancestors to the English. When the latter opened their intrigue with his Majesty, he naturally expected that the Empire of which his ancestors held the sceptre would be made over to him. Although his Majesty knew perfectly well the perfidious conduct of the servants of the East India Company and declared an apprehension "lest when they gain possession of the country they may prove forgetful of him," yet his Majesty played into their hands and fell into the snare laid by them for him. He materially helped them in capturing Delhi and without his assistance, it is questionable if the fall of Delhi would have been so easily accomplished.

General Lake settled Delhi by appointing Lieut.-Colonel Ochterlony as Resident and to hold the Chief Command at Delhi. For the purpose of garrisoning the place, he left one battalion and four companies of

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native infantry, with a corps of Mewaties which had been newly raised under the command of those Europeans who had quitted the service of Scindhia.

Having made these arrangements General Lake left Delhi on the 24th September, 1803, and marched on to Agra. That place held out for some time and there was some desultory fighting for some days. But the "secret manner in which things" were conducted by General Lake made the men in Scindhia's service, amounting to about 2,500, transfer their services to the English Commander and march into his camp. The fort at Agra also fell into his hands as the garrison capitulated on the evening of the 17th October, on terms of safety to their persons and private property.

One other memorable battle had to be fought on the plains in the vicinity of Agra before Lake's campaign against Scindhia was brought to a close in the North. This was the battle of Laswarree. How this battle was brought about will be understood by the following extract from General Lake's letter marked "Private" to the Marquess Wellesley, dated Camp Kerowly, October 28th, 1803. He wrote:—

"I had intended to have marched immediately towards Gwalior, and in my way to the Chumbal to have destroyed the remains of some of Duderneg's brigade in that direction; but upon finding the day before yesterday that they had begun their march to this side, I determined to intercept them, which I have not been able to do exactly; and

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I have been obliged to halt this day for a very heavy fall of rain last night, that made the roads so bad as to prevent my moving this morning. I shall march to-morrow morning, and hope very shortly to be able to give a very good account of them, it is not clear what their intention is, except plundering the country, whether they incline to go towards Delhi or Jeypore, whichever route they take, we shall soon be with them. *They have no leader, and one day they talk of coming in to us, another day they have some other scheme, and no one will take them into their service, consequently they cannot exist long. They are very few in number, and short, I believe, of ammunition, therefore, Your Lordship need not be the least uneasy about them.* * * * * The moment I have settled these gentry, if Ambajee does not give up Gwalior, I shall turn my hand that way, and have little doubt of its being an easy conquest."

It was under these circumstances that the battle of Laswaree was fought. There was every advantage on the side of the British, while Scindhia's troops who remained loyal and faithful to their master labored under many disadvantages, since the 'secret manner in which things had been conducted' by General Lake had raised traitors in their camp. It was a foregone conclusion then, that the loyal and faithful troops of Scindhia would sustain defeat. And the events proved this.

On the 1st November, 1803, General Lake wrote to the Marquess Wellesley:—

"I have the honor to inform your Excellency, that

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I marched from Agra the 27th ultimo, in pursuit of the Mahratta force, which was composed of the brigades which had been detached from the Deccan in the early part of the campaign, and of a few battallions which had effected their escape from Delhi. I was the more anxious to defeat this corps from its being furnished with a numerous artillery. Owing to the detention the army met with from a heavy fall of rain, it was not until the 29th that it reached a camp to the west-ward of Futtipoor. From intelligence I received here of the rapid manner in which the Mahratta army was moving, I determined to leave the heavy artillery, with a proper detachment of infantry for its protection, and to pursue the enemy by forced marches, in the hope of being able the more speedily to come up with him. On the 31st, the army encamped at a short distance from the ground which the enemy had quitted the same morning. Possessed of this intelligence, I resolved to make an effort to overtake him with all the cavalry of the army, in the intention of delaying him by a light engagement, until the infantry should be able to come up. To this end the cavalry marched at twelve last night, and having performed a distance of more than forty miles in twenty-four hours, came up with the enemy this morning soon after day-break. From the sudden manner in which I came upon the enemy I ventured to make an attack with the cavalry alone, supported by the mounted artillery, but finding him too advantageously posted to hope for complete success without too much risk, I drew the cavalry out of reach of cannon shot, and waited the arrival of the infantry. Soon after their arrival, I made a General attack upon the enemy's position, the result of which I have the satisfaction of informing your Excellency has been a complete, though I sincerely lament to add, dear bought victory. The enemy were totally defeated,

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with the loss of all their cannon, tumbrils, and baggage; * * *."

Thus was fought the Battle of Laswaree, which Colonel Malleson calls one of the decisive battles of India. It would have decided, nay sealed and doomed the fate of the British in India, had not there been traitors in the camp of Scindhia who had been bought over by the gold of the English and did not scruple to betray their master. That those troops of Scindhia who were faithful to their salt fought bravely, is borne testimoney to by even General Lake. In his letter marked 'Secret' dated Camp Lasswary, November 2nd, 1803, he wrote to the Marquess Wellesley :—

"These fellows fought like devils, or rather heroes, and had we not made a disposition for attack in a style that we should have done against the most formidable army we could have been opposed to, I verily believe, from the position they had taken, we might have failed."

But notwithstanding their gallantry, Scindhia's troops were beaten, because they had been deserted in a critical hour by their leaders. For General Lake wrote,

"if they had been commanded by French officers, the event would have been, I fear, extremely doubtful. I never was in so severe a business in my life or anything like it, and pray to God I never may be in such a situation again."

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General Lake had now executed all the orders of the Governor-General, except capturing Gwalior. So he wrote to the Marquess Wellesley :—

"I feel happy in having accomplished all your wishes, except Gwalior, which I trust we shall get possession of by treaty with Ambajee, the fall of these brigades will bring him to terms immediately."

General Lake, however, did not proceed to Gwalior. The reason for his not doing so is given in his letter to the Marquess Wellesley marked "Private," and dated Camp, Lasawary, November 3rd, 1803. He wrote :—

"I shall as soon as I can move my wounded men, begin my march towards that doubtful character, Ambajee, but I shall in the first instance proceed but slowly, as I wish to impress the Raja of Jeypore with an idea, that, if he does not come to terms shortly, I may pay him a visit. All I mean by this is to alarm him into some decisive measure; he seems at present to be playing a very suspicious game."

The reason then for General Lake not proceeding to Gwalior was that he wished to bring the princes of Rajputana to terms. In his "Private and Most Secret" letter to the Governor-General, dated Camp at Pahisser, November 14th, 1803, he wrote :—

"I everyday experience more fully the advantages gained by the victory on the 1st, the consequences attending it are beyond all calculation; it has quieted the country,

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it has brought the Raja of Jeypore and all his wicked and traitorous advisers to reason, they are now upon their march to my Camp."

But after all, General Lake did not proceed to Gwalior. With the battle at Laswaree, he closed his campaign against Scindhia in the North.

The success of the British arms was not a little due to the fact that there was a severe drought in India in 1803. Lake wrote to the Marquess Wellesley on May 12, 1804 (Wellesley Despatches, Vol. IV, p. 64):—

"The natives, who are extremely superstitious, say that God Almighty ordered the dry season for the purpose of our conquering Hindustan, saying that nothing can stand against the British as God fights for them. I do most sincerely agree with them, as our successes have been beyond all parallel, and must have had the assistance of an invisible hand. I cannot help offering my thanks to Providence whenever I reflect upon the operations of this campaign, which nothing but His guidance could have carried into effect."

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CHAPTER XXXII.

THE END OF THE WAR WITH THE CONFEDERATES.

The seed so laboriously and secretly sown by the Governor-General, in accordance with Machiavellian suggestions, had produced its harvest. It was the desire of the Marquess Wellesley to see the total destruction of Scindhia and also of the Raja of Berar But in this, he was disappointed. It will be remembered that he had delegated the power of concluding peace with the Marathas to his brother, Major-General Wellesley. But even with the treachery of the latter in fighting the battle of Argaum after declaring the armistice with Scindhia, he did not succeed in carrying out to the fullest extent, the desire of the Governor-General to totally crush Dowlut Rao Scindhia. General Wellesley thus explained the reason of his failure in his letter, dated Camp at Rajoora, 23rd November, 1803, to Major Shawe, Private Secretary to the Governor-General. He wrote :—

"I have already apprized the Governor-General that it was not in my power to do anything more against Dowlut Rao Scindhia. Nothing could be done on the side of Guzerat in particular, where we shall remain in possession

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of the most advanced station we have got, and which we hold only by one battallion; while Colonel Murray, with the remainder of his corps, is obliged to move upon Canojee Rao Guickwar.

"Scindhia has with him in the field an army of horse only. It is impossible to make any impression upon his army, unless by following it for a great length of time and distance. To do this would remove our troops still further than they are already from all the sources of supply, and would prevent the operations against the Raja of Berar, from which alone, in my opinion, we are to expect peace."

The English were now as much anxious for bringing about peace, as the Maratha confederates themselves. Accordingly, negotiations were opened and after some delay, treaties of peace were drawn up. The Raja of Berar's Ministers signed the treaty on behalf of their master in December, 1803. The ambassadors of Scindhia also did the same in December, 1803. The greedy servants of the Company amputated not like surgeons, but more like butchers. Both the confederates, Scindhia and the Raja of Berar, were robbed of all their fertile provinces and the yoke of dependence on the British was imposed on their necks.

In February, 1804, another supplementary treaty was concluded with Scindhia at Boorhunpore by which that Maratha prince was made to enter the system of subsidiary alliance. It was now necessary for Scindhia to enter into an alliance because he was

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afraid of his late antagonist, Jeswant Rao Holkar. The latter's power was not crushed and thus he could have inflicted on Scindhia whose resources had been crippled by the war defeats at any moment convenient to him. The Governor-General's exertions based on Machiavellian suggestions now bore fruit. He was successful beyond his expectations. Scindhia had tried to resist the imposition of the yoke of subsidiary alliance on the neck of the Peishwa. But now, he was in that helpless condition in which he solicited the British to favor him by placing the yoke of subsidiary alliance on his neck. How proud must the Governor-General have felt on that day when, instead of opposing, Scindhia consented to fall into the snare of the subsidiary alliance.

Mr. Mill, with his usual lucidity, has discussed the estimate of advantages from the war. He concludes by saying:

"In summing up the account of the treaty of Bassein, we can only, therefore, approach to a determinate conclusion. On the one side, there is the certain and the enormous evil, of the expenditure of the Maratha war. Whether the subsidiary alliances, which were looked to for compensation, were calculated to yield any compensation, and did not rather add to the evils, is seen to be at the least exceedingly doubtful. The policy of the treaty of Bassein cannot, therefore, be misunderstood." Mill's *History*, Vol. VI, p. 392.

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CHAPTER XXXIII.

THE WAR WITH HOLKAR.

The peace concluded with Scindhia and the Rajah of Berar did not terminate the war. If anything it seems the treaties of peace with the Maratha confederates served to incite Holkar to hostilities with the British. There is a good deal of historical parallel between the careers of Madhoji Scindhia and Jeswunt Rao Holkar. Both played into the hands of the British. Both served to weaken and dissolve the Maratha Confederacy and thus indirectly strengthen the hands of the British. Neither of them could be called a statesman. It is said that "Fortune smiles on bastards." This was true in the case of Madhoji Scindhia, but not in that of Jeswunt Rao Holkar. During his lifetime at least, Madhoji was considered to be a very fortunate man. He was the actual, if if not the nominal Emperor of Hindustan.

But fortune can hardly be said to have smiled on Jeswunt Rao Holkar. Disasters and misfortunes dogged his steps throughout his life. Although he employed the same tactics which brought honor and glory to Madhoji, the results were most disastrous for him. His misfortunes were the natural conse-

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quences of the previous blunder of giving the servants of the Company credit for honesty and good faith which they never possessed.

Jeswunt Rao Holkar did not join the Maratha confederates against the British. From the letter which Major-General Wellesley had written to him,* before the war had been declared against the Raja of Berar and Scindhia, it would appear that the British had given Holkar to understand that he would be amply rewarded for his neutrality or rather treachery to the Maratha Confederates. Although no definite promises were made to Holkar in the letter which General Wellesley had written to him, yet it concluded with the following significant words:—

"I send this letter in charge of Kawder Nawaz Khan, a respectable officer, who enjoys my confidence, and who will explain anything you desire to know respecting my wishes."

This letter kept Holkar quiet. Hence it is not improbable that Kawder Nawaz Khan had, on behalf of the British, given Holkar to understood that his neutrality would not be forgotten by them.

But before the war with the Maratha confederates had been over, the British had been contemplating to make war upon Holkar. Dating his letter from

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* The letter is dated 16th July, 1803 and extracts from it have been given on a previous page.

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Camp before Gaureghur, 12th December, 1803, Major General Wellesley wrote to Major Shawe, Private Secretary to the Marquess Wellesley:—

"I shall find a difficulty in settling with Scindhia on account of the total want of information respecting the countries, which I have demanded from him. His vakeels declare that he has no countries north of the Rajputs, of which the Peishwah and Holkar have not each a third; excepting Perron's jaghire, which he is willing to make over to the Company.

"*Therefore, unless we make war upon Holkar, and deprive the Peishwah of his territories,* we shall not succeed in driving the Marhattas entirely from these countries, although Scindhia should cede his rights."

From the words put in italics in the above, it will be noticed why the British wanted to go to war with Holkar. But General Wellesley did not advocate war. For, he wrote:—

"And I acknowledge that if this is really the state of the case, I should prefer to see Scindhia remain in the partnership, than to introduce the Company."

Had the negotiations been entrusted to General Wellesley, it is probable that the war with Holkar would have been avoided, or at all events postponed till some indefinite time. Although politics has no conscience, yet General Wellesley would have scrupled to have gone to war with Holkar, forgetting the obligations he owed to the latter for his not joining the Maratha Confederates and thus allowing

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the General to gain the victories of Assaye and Argaum. But the Governor-General afterwards entrusted General Lake to negotiate with Holkar. Lake, as has been so often said before, was a "ruffian". His "secret manner" of conducting business was neither creditable to him nor honorable to his employers. It is more than probable that Lake's conduct provoked Holkar to hostilities.

The Governor-General was also anxious to crush Holkar. He was an ungrateful man. A sense of gratitude would have dictated him to cultivate the friendship of Holkar, for the latter had helped him in placing the yoke of the subsidiary alliance on the neck of the Peishwa and crushing Scindhia and the Raja of Berar. In a "private" letter to Lieut.-General Lake, dated Barrackpore, Novr. 18th, 1803, the Marquess Wellesley wrote:—

"If Holkar should mix in the war, you must look to the destruction of his force as a primary object; and it may perhaps be most advisable to draw him to the northward at a distance from his resources which are very much limited. I believe his present objects to be neutrality with regard to the main contest, and plunder of every neutral power, together with pilfer of the belligerent powers."

But it was convenient now for the Governor-General to ignore the fact that Holkar had been bought over by General Wellesley by sweet words and specious and false promises. On no other

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grounds can the "neutrality" of Holkar be satisfactorily explained. Lieut.-General Lake, writing to the Marquess Wellesley, on the 24th November, 1803, said:—

"I can not reconcile the conduct of Holkar, for if he had intended hostile measures against the British Government, he might have annoyed me most seriously, and made my approach to Agra very difficult by joining the battallions that had arrived under Duderneg and Louis, instead of which he has waited till the whole of these are destroyed, one may say annihilated, and then talks of oversetting the British. I can scarcely believe it possible such an idea could have entered into his head, for by all accounts he is a shrewd, sensible man, with an extraordinary firm mind, and supposed to be ever watchful, and ready to seize a good opportunity for carrying his plans into effect; should he therefore be the man, as represented, he surely cannot have any intention to attack us when we have the entire possession of Hindustan, the strong fortress of Agra, and very many chieftains on this side of India entirely with us."

A shrewd man like Jeswant Rao Holkar, though not a far-seeing statesman, was not like some stupid bird to be easily caught by the chaff. For his neutrality he expected some rewards; but he was disappointed. However, he was not going to war with the British with a light heart. On the 28th December, 1803, in his "private" letter to the Marquess Wellesley, Lieutenant-General Lake wrote:

"You will receive this by express, conveying a letter

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from Holkar; and I feel happy to think that he means to be upon friendly terms. You may be assured that nothing shall happen on my part to cause him to alter these sentiments, but I own his actions do not appear to accord with his words. I can venture to assure your Lordship that he can do us no harm, as my frontier is too strongly guarded for any set of men to get past it. * * * * * *

"I write in haste, that no time should be lost in sending Holkar's letter, who is so little to be depended upon, that I wish to know your Lordship's opinions and directions respecting him."

Then in a postscript, Lieut.-General Lake wrote:

"You may depend on my watching Holkar at every turn."

It was General Lake who was desirous of crossing blades with Holkar. His very 'secret manner' in conducting things brought about the war with Holkar.

Unfortunately the Marquess Wellesley did not leave India, according to his expressed intention, by the end of the year 1803. Had he left India then, in all probability the war with Holkar would not have taken place. At the same time also the prestige of the British in India would not have suffered by the unsuccessful siege of Bharatpur, which is aptly called the "Gibraltar" of India.

On the 31st December, 1803, the Marquess Wellesley wrote a "private and confidential" letter to

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Lord Castlereagh. He commenced the letter as follows : —

"The state of the war with the Maratha Chiefs, and of the various depending negotiations, has determined me to remain in India, until I can bring our affairs to a favorable issue. My departure would occasion the utmost embarrassment to General Lake, to General Wellesley, and to every person concerned in the conduct of the war, or in the negotiation of peace."

He asked the permission of the Court of Directors to stay in India for an indefinite time to carry out his policy of aggression against the Marathas. His stay in India also strengthened the hands of General Lake. Holkar was handed over by the Governor-General to the tender mercies of that "ruffian" Commander-in-chief in India.

The editor of the Despatches of the Marquess Wellesley has not published the letters of General Lake dated the 19th, 28th and 29th December, 1803, addressed to the Governor-General regarding Holkar. The editor excused their publication by saying,

"the letters are voluminous, and would occupy much space."

The publication of these letters would have been of great historical importance. But from the Marquess Wellesley's reply we are able to conjecture the purport of General Lake's letters. Marking his letter "Secret" and dating it from Fort William, 17th

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January, 1804, the Governor-General wrote to Lieutenant-General Lake:—

"I have the honor to acknowledge the receipt of your Excellency's despatches under date the 19th, 28th and 29th December, 1803. * * *

"*The letters of which Jeswunt Rao Holkar has transmitted copies to your Excellency must have been forwarded to Holkar by Major-General Wellesley in his own name.* I have not addressed any letter to Jeswunt Rao Holkar, but Major-General Wellesley was authorized by my instructions of the 26th June, to open an amicable negotiation with that chieftain."

In the published despatches of the Duke of Wellington, these letters written by him to Holkar are not given. But from the words which have been put in italics in the above extract, it is evident that Major-General Wellesley had fed the mind of Holkar with false promises and hopes in order to keep him neutral. This statement derives support from the demands which Holkar made on the British as soon as the war with the Maratha confederates had been over. He sent vakeels to General Lake with whom they had an interview on the 18th March, 1804, when they submitted the following propositions:

"1st, that Holkar should be permitted to collect chouth agreeably to the custom of his ancestors;

2nd, that the ancient possessions formerly held by the family, such as Etawah, &c., 12 districts between the Ganges

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and Jumna, and a District in Bundelcund, should be ceded to him;

"3rd, that the country of Hurriana, which was formerly in the possession of the family, should be given to him;

"4th, that the country then in his possession should be guaranteed, and a treaty should be concluded with him on the same terms as with Scindhia."

Of course, General Lake did not accede to any one of these propositions. But the very fact of Holkar's venturing to make these propositions shows that he had been given to understand that his neutrality would be amply rewarded.

Captain Grant Duff in his History of the Marathas (p. 587), writes:—

"Five or six weeks before the despatch of these wukeels to General Lake, Jeswunt Rao Holkar had addressed a letter to General Wellesley, in which he demanded from him certain districts claimed by his family in the Deccan as the condition of peace, and concluded in a strain of the most vaunting menace, in case by non-compliance it should be rendered necessary to resort to war."

But General Wellesley had no longer the power to treat with Holkar. The Governor-General considered it expedient now to delegate that power to General Lake. In his 'secret' letter to General Lake dated 17th January, 1804, the Marquess Wellesley wrote:—

"It is now expedient to decide the course to be pursued with respect to Jeswunt Rao Holkar.

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"The great distance of the honorable Major-General Wellesley's position from the Camp of Jeswunt Rao Holkar, must render the intercourse difficult from that quarter; and as your Excellency's situation is more likely to be convenient for that purpose, it is my intention that your Excellency should immediately open a negotiation with Jeswunt Rao Holkar."

Jeswunt Rao Holkar had proved of great service to the British, but the Governor-General was anxious not to recognize Jeswunt Rao Holkar as possessing any status in the Maratha polity. For, he wrote to General Lake :—

"The authority exercised by Jeswunt Rao Holkar, in the name of Khundeh Rao, over the possession of Holkar family, is manifestly an usurpation of the rights of Cashi Rao Holkar, the legitimate heir and successor of Tuckojee Holkar. Consistently therefore with the principles of justice, no arrangement can be proposed between the British Government and Jeswunt Rao Holkar, involving a sanction of the exclusion of Cashi Rao Holkar from his hereditary dominions."

It was convenient now for the Governor-General to talk of *rights* and *justice*. But not long before he had not only connived at but encouraged and abetted Holkar to trample under foot all principles of justice and rights of others.

In his letter he continued :—

"Under the sanction of his Highness the Peishwa's authority, the British Government would be justified in

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adopting measures for the limitation of Jeswunt Rao Holkar's power, and for the restoration of Cashi Rao Holkar's rights; either by force or compromise; * * The Peishwa may not now be anxious for the reduction of Holkar's power, or for the restoration of Cashi Rao Holkar to his hereditary rights. But it may be expected that his Highness would readily concur in a proposition for the restoration of Cashi Rao, and for the punishment of Jeswunt Rao Holkar. * * *

"The enterprising spirit, military character, and ambitious views of Jeswunt Rao Holkar render the reduction of his power a desirable object with reference to the complete establishment of tranquility in India."

Here then a distinct note of war was sounded by the Governor-General. But Jeswunt Rao Holkar knew the storm that was brewing and had profited by the war of Scindhia with the British. Scindhia's disasters were mainly due to the treachery of his European servants. Holkar had also in his pay a few European military adventurers. As soon as he came to know that these men had been intriguing with General Lake, he displayed great and genuine statesmanship by putting them to death. That was the most proper act he ever did in his life. General Lake's 'secret manner' of conducting things meant in non-diplomatic language 'intrigues and conspiracies.' There is no doubt that he had been intriguing with the European servants of Holkar. The names of these men were Captains Vickars, Todd,

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and Ryan, and they were presumably natives of Great Britain. Captain Grant Duff writes:—

"The army in Hindustan under General Lake was still in the field to watch the motions of Holkar whose menacing position, as well as the tone of his language, the General report of his hostile intentions, and *his having put to death three officers, British subjects who wished, in consequence of these reports, to take advantage of the Governor-General's proclamation and retire from his service,* afforded strong indications of an approaching rupture." (p. 586).

From the words put in italics in the above extract, there can be no doubt that the European servants of Holkar had been intriguing with General Lake. We should give credit to Holkar for his great foresight in having put to death these traitors in his camp. Had Scindhia done the same before hostilities had commenced with the British he would not have been subjected to any humiliation at the hands of his enemies. That Holkar's European servants would have betrayed him had they been allowed to take advantage of the Governor-General's proclamation, there can be no doubt. That Holkar did not meet with so many disasters in his war with the British, nay, on the contrary, he kept them at bay for a long time, and discomfited them in a great variety of ways, seems to be principally due to the fact, that he had got rid of, in proper time, the European traitors in his camp.

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Although the Governor-General was talking of the 'principles of justice,' and 'rights' and so on, he had no intention of just then precipitating war with Jeswunt Rao Holkar or to take the part of Kasi Rao Holkar. The Governor-General wrote to General Lake, in the letter from which extracts have been given above:

"It may be further observed, that in proportion to the defect of Holkar's title, it would be his interest to abstain from any measures calculated to excite the resentment of the British Government.

"These circumstances would tend in an equal degree to preclude any combination between Jeswunt Rao Holkar and the emissaries, or the forces of France. With a circumscribed territory and with a confined field of action, Jeswunt Rao Holkar's military power would probably decay. * * * *

"An immediate attempt, therefore, to restore Cashi Rao Holkar to his hereditary rights, would involve more positive and certain difficulty and danger than could be justly apprehended from the continuance of Jeswunt Rao Holkar in the possession of the territories actually under his authority. A pacific conduct towards Jeswunt Rao Holkar in the present moment, will not preclude the future restoration of Cashi Rao Holkar to the possession of his hereditary rights. * * * *

"It will be necessary, however, to regulate our proceedings with respect to Jeswant Rao Holkar in such a manner as to avoid any acknowledgment and confirmation of the legitimacy of his dominion, or of that of Khundeh Rao Holkar.

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"The considerations detailed in the preceding part of this despatch have determined me not to restore Cashi Rao Holkar to the possession of his hereditary dominions, and I am also disposed to leave Jeswunt Rao Holkar in the exercise of his present authority, without any further interposition of the British power than that which may be required for the security of the chiefs and states in Hindustan, with whom we have contracted defensive alliances."

The words put in italics in the above extract show the spirit in which the Governor-General wanted to make Holkar a victim of his perfidy and dishonesty. He instructed General Lake that

"On the basis of the proposed arrangement, your Excellency is authorized to enter into a negotiation with Jeswunt Rao Holkar, exercising your discretion with regard to the degree of security which we may possess under Jeswunt Rao Holkar's acquiescence in the terms of any such arrangement."

The Governor-General tried to gain his object by fraud rather than by force. He wanted to deceive and not to conquer Holkar. So he wrote to General Lake :—

"If Holkar's views should appear to be evidently hostile, your Excellency will judge how far it might be expedient to move against his forces. My wish is to avoid such an extremity, and if peace with Sindhia should be obtained on terms of adequate security, I should desire that the army under your Excellency's command should speedily be formed in such a manner as might effectually

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expedite the security and settlement of our valuable conquests and powerful alliances. * * * *

"The British empire in India, at the close of the war with the confederate chiefs, will assume an aspect of such splendour as must daunt the most adventurous spirit of any chief or state excluded from the benefits of our protection. I am, therefore, satisfied that after the conclusion of peace with Sindhia, Jeswunt Rao Holkar, instead of attempting to encounter the British arms, will anxiously solicit the countenance and favor of our Government."

These considerations prompted the Governor-General to try and adopt a temporizing policy towards Holkar. General Lake, although he outwardly professed peace, was inwardly desirous of war with Holkar. On the 4th February, 1804, General Lake wrote to the Marquess Wellesley :—

"I shall endeavour to avoid hostilities with Ambajee, if possible, as it appears to me if we commence a war with him and Holkar, should he choose to be inimical to us, it might bring on a war with many other powers, and lead us into a very long and perhaps a general war, which of course shall if possible be avoided; at the same time *I much fear till Ambajee and Holkar are annihilated that permanent peace can not be expected.*"

The words in italics show how anxious was General Lake for war. At the same time, he moved to a situation which he knew would provoke Holkar to hostilities. Dating his letter from Camp Surrouth, February 11th, 1804, General Lake wrote to the Marquess Wellesley :—

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"I have moved on thus far on my road to take up a position near Dawsa, which will cover the passes on this side into Hindustan, *the only one in this quarter by which Holkar could pass should he be hostilely inclined;* at the same time it gives spirit and confidence in our protection to the Raja of Jeypoor of which he was most desirous."

This threatening attitude of General Lake must have impressed Holkar with the belief that the British wanted to go to war with him. That the intentions of the Commander-in-Chief were anything but pacific towards Holkar, his various letters to the Governor-General distinctly show. The following extracts from his "private" letter to the Marquess Wellesley dated March 22nd, 1804, prove his hostile intentions against Holkar. For he wrote:—

"That parts of our territories are certainly at present by no means in the state I could wish them, nor will they, I fear, be much better so long as Holkar's army is in existence, as many chieftains, and very particularly the Rohillas, are ready to join him if he could break into our possessions."

Again,

"I cannot divest myself of the idea, that if Holkar is not destroyed, he will as soon as the rains are over be extremely troublesome. I never was so plagued as I am with this devil; * * * That he is decidedly inimical to the English there cannot be a doubt. I feel myself in a most awkward situation respecting the robber; for if he does not come on to me, which I do not

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suppose he will, I cannot move on towards him, as the moment I advance and leave an opening for him, he will give me the slip, get into our territories with his horse, burn and destroy everything he comes near."

Although, he was so desirous for going to war with Holkar, yet with that consummate hypocrisy of which he was a perfect master, he tried to assure the Marquess Wellesley that his intentions were pacific. For, he wrote :—

"Don't, my dear Lord, from this language imagine that I shall commence hostilities with Holkar, and lead you into another war unless he comes, or till I hear from you."

At the time when he was thus making protestations of his pacific intentions, General Lake discovered that Holkar had been conspiring and intriguing with the chiefs and peoples of Hindustan against the British. It is alleged that some of his (Holkar's) criminal correspondence was intercepted by General Lake. Regarding the genuineness of this intercepted correspondence, we have grave doubts. Holkar must have employed men as carriers of his letters who would not have easily betrayed their trust into the hands of the British. It is a curious fact, moreover, in the history of British India that whenever the British have desired to wage war on some non-Christian power, or swallow up some non-Christian State,

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they have tried to justify their deeds by producing correspondence (alleged to have been intercepted) which, if genuine, would undoubtedly compromise and incriminate their enemies. We fail to understand why and how should the British always succeed in intercepting the criminal correspondence of their enemies? In some cases, the incriminating correspondence has been proved to be forgeries. So it is within the bounds of probability that the so-called intercepted correspondence of Holkar, showing his hostile designs against the British, were forgeries abetted or connived at by General Lake to precipitate war with that Maratha Prince.

The antecedents of General Lake would warrant us in suspecting the intercepted correspondence as forgeries. It is now known that in Ireland, he had provoked the natives of that island to rebellion, which brought on the union of Ireland with Great Britain. We have so often narrated his misdeeds in Ireland, that there is very little necessity now to refer to them again.

Now, such being the character of General Lake, is it improbable to believe that his so-called intercepted correspondence were forgeries committed with the intention of precipitating war with Holkar, an object which was so dear to his heart? The Governor-General was not apparently inclined to go to war with Holkar. The only way to induce him to declare

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hostilities against Holkar was to make him believe that the latter entertained hostile designs against the British. Nothing short of forgeries would effect this ; and knowing the character of General Lake, it is not unsafe to say that the so-called intercepted correspondence were forgeries.

But even if the intercepted correspondence were not forgeries, no one not blinded by prejudice and indecent partisanship would blame Holkar for trying to excite the chiefs and peoples of Hindustan against the British. Holkar was a disappointed man. He had been smarting under the wrongs and injuries he had received at the hands of the latter. If under such circumstances, remembering the treatment he had received at their hands, he in his letters to the different Hindoo chiefs, called the English, as "infidel Christians ;" the "enemies of the Hindoo faith", and "seditious men, whom they should be prepared to do distinguished services against", he had very just grounds for his opinion. No surprise need be expressed if he called on the Hindoo chiefs to aid his "victorious army in taking vengeance on the ungrateful multitude" (*i.e.* the British), or if he declared to the Mussalman chiefs that "it is the object of the religion, and the rule of Moosulmans, that the whole body of the faithful having assembled together, be employed, heart and soul, in extirpating the profligate infidels."

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This so-called intercepted correspondence produced the effect which General Lake had desired, for on the perusal of this correspondence the Governor-General decided to declare war upon Holkar.

On the 4th April, 1804, in forwarding the intercepted correspondence, General Lake wrote to the Governor-General :—

"The conduct which Jeswunt Rao Holkar continues to pursue is so evidently hostile to the British interests, and the demands preferred by his vakeels, and since repeated by his confidential servant Bhawani Shunker, are in their nature so inadmissible, and indeed insulting, considered only as propositions from Holkar to a Government whose pre-eminent rank and consequence in the empire of Hindustan, is now fully acknowledged by the other established powers, that I am fully impressed with the belief that no modified arrangement which could be formed, nor sacrifice which could be made, consistent with the honor and dignity of the British Government would satisfy the ambition of that chieftain, nor contribute to ensure to the several states of Hindostan that permanent peace and safety which it has formed a principal object of your Excellency's administration to secure to them. * * * *

"Your Excellency will have perceived that the forbearance hitherto observed towards Jeswunt Rao Holkar by the British Government, has had no effect in inducing a more friendly disposition on his part towards us, nor in altering his conduct towards our allies. * * * * The confidence which he appears to entertain of a successful commencement of hostilities with this Government, principally arises, I am inclined to believe, from the

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support he expects from the power and influence of several of the subjects of Government, with whom his intrigues have been successful, and from the hope of being enabled by their assistance and junction in the Doab to create disturbances, and to distress us by the diminution of our resources and supplies.

"To frustrate any design of this nature on his part, which might certainly be attended with many distressing consequences if attempted during the remainder of the dry season, I shall be obliged to retain this army in such a position as may cover the valuable possessions of the Company in this quarter."

This was tantamount to a declaration of war with Holkar. General Lake on the same date also replied to the letter from Holkar, dated 27th March, 1804. Holkar's letter was full of sentiments quite friendly to the British. He wrote:—

"* * * * It is certain that the bond of friendship does not depend upon the interchange of letters, or the observance of complimentary customs. It is proper that you should first acquaint me with the means which, after due deliberation of the consequence, you propose should be used for settling all disputes, for ensuring the welfare of the people, and establishing friendship, that I may then send to you a confidential person who shall be agreeable to both parties; considering in every respect your attachment, I have no improper views against the Company or its connections; you will, as the means of increasing our friendship, continue to favor me with your friendly correspondence."

This request of Holkar, namely, to acquaint him

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with the means which the British proposed should be used for settling all disputes and for establishing friendship, was a perfectly legitimate one. Had their intentions been pacific, they would have unhesitatingly acceded to it. But they were not straightforward, as they were scheming to bring about the ruin of Holkar. General Lake replied to this letter on the 4th April, 1804, as follows:—

"You write that it is necessary, before you send to me a confidential person who shall be agreeable to both parties, that I should acquaint you with the means which I propose should be used for settling disputes and giving peace to the country; you will have been fully informed by the contents of my former letter, * * * that those means are entirely in your own power, and depend solely on yourself. The British Government requires nothing further on your part, than you should retire to your own country, and cease to molest the allies of the Government, whom they are bound to protect, whilst they will on their part observe the same line of conduct towards you, by avoiding all interference with your country and concerns. * * * *

"From the contents of this letter it appears that you consider as an indispensable preliminary to the establishment of friendship an admission on the part of the government of unfounded claims which you must be sensible have never been submitted to by the British Government, in their political relations with any state of Hindostan or the Deccan, and which it would be derogatory to their power and dignity to listen to."

This, then, in plain language meant that there

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was no other mode of settling all disputes than that of an appeal to arms.

On the receipt of General Lake's letter, the Marquess Wellesley wrote to him a "secret" letter, dated April 16, 1804. He wrote:—

"Having fully considered your Excellency's despatches to a date as late as that of your Excellency's letter of the 4th instant, which reached me yesterday, I think it necessary to apprize your Excellency without delay, of my determination to commence hostilities against Jeswunt Rao Holkar, at the earliest practicable period of time.

* * * *

"A copy of this letter is transmitted to the honourable Major-General Wellesley on this day, together with my orders, directing him to co-operate with your Excellency from the Deccan, against the resources and power of Jeswunt Rao Holkar.

"I also forward on this day similar orders to the Resident with Dowlut Rao Scindhia, directing him to prepare Scindhia to act in concert with the British forces in Hindostan and the Deccan."

This decision of the Governor-General filled the heart of the Commander-in-Chief with joy, for he had now succeeded in inducing him to declare war on Holkar. On the 29th April, 1804, he wrote a letter marked 'private' to the Marquess Wellesley. He wrote:—

"Your Lordship's despatch of the 16th instant, which I received yesterday, conveying your instructions for commencing hostilities with Jeswunt Rao Holkar, relieved my

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mind from the greatest anxiety, as I was much alarmed at the idea of entering into a war without your sanction, and was very fearful from the conduct of Holkar, that it would not be possible for me to avoid it; however I have been fortunate enough to desist from action, and at the same time to alarm him sufficiently from doing any mischief."

The principal measure which the Commander-in-Chief had adopted to alarm Holkar consisted in his having advanced toward the territory of the Raja of Jaipore. He had sent a detachment under the command of Lieutenant-Colonel Ball to Kanore, about ninety miles South-West of Delhi. Another detachment under the command of Lieut-Colonel Monson was sent on the 18th and arrived in the vicinity of Jaipore on the 21st April. This detachment consisted of three battallions of infantry and its object was to encourage the Raja of Jaipore to hold out against Holkar. These measures convinced Holkar that the British entertained hostile intentions against him. So on the 23rd April, 1804, he retreated southward, apparently with the object of completing his war-like preparations.

But as yet, war had not been formally declared against Holkar by the Governor-General. When Lake received the decision of the Marquess Wellesley on the 28th April, he was very glad to go to war with Holkar. He had thought, and he had never concealed it, that he would be able to crush Holkar without much difficulty. He had counted upon his

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'secret manner' of conducting things for success. Major-General Wellesley was also directed by the Governor-General to invade Holkar's territories. So General Lake also thought, that the ability and skill of General Wellesley combined with his perfidy would contribute to the success of the undertaking. But Major-General Wellesley was not inclined to carry out the wishes of the Governor-General or of the Commander-in-Chief.

This inability of General Wellesley has been attributed to the famine which was at that time prevailing in the Deccan. Mr. Mill wries :—

"When Major-General Wellesley received instructions to begin hostilities, the Deccan was laboring under a scarcity approaching to famine. * * * * But to conduct the operations of an army, in a country totally destitute of forage and provisions, appeared to General Wellesley so hazardous, that he represented it as almost impossible for him to advance against Chandore (one of Holkar's possessions in the Deccan) till the commencement of the rains." (Vol. VI, p. 401).

But this does not appear to us to be a sufficient reason for General Wellesley's desisting from carrying out the instructions of the Governor-General. From the published correspondence of the Duke of Wellington, it seems that he was at that time dispirited and disgusted with the conduct of his brother the Governor-General's doings. General Wellesley had negotiated the treaty of peace with Scindhia.

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He knew what interpretation the ministers of Scindhia who had signed the Treaty on behalf of their master put on the various articles of that Treaty. According to their interpretation, and it seems to have been that of General Wellesley also, Gwalior should have belonged to Scindhia. But the Governor-General thought otherwise.

It will be remembered that the Governor-General had instructed General Lake to proceed to and capture Gwalior. The reasons which induced the Commander-in-Chief not to carry out the orders of the Marquess Wellesley have already been adverted to. General Lake had thought that he would succeed in gaining Gwalior by bribing the Commandant of that Fort. But in this, he was disappointed. The 'secret manner' of his conducting business did not succeed. The failure in getting Gwalior was thus rankling in the breast of the Governor-General as well as of the Commander-in-Chief.

But according to the Treaty with Scindhia which General Wellesley had negotiated, it was understood by Scindhia's ministers that Gwalior would belong to their master. As said before, such was the view of General Wellesley as well. Major (afterwards the well-known Sir John) Malcolm had been appointed as Resident with Scindhia. He was also of the opinion that Gwalior should belong to Scindhia.

In some of the letters which he wrote to Major

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Malcolm at this period, General Wellesley expressed his indignation and disgust at the haggling of the Governor-General over Gwalior. On the 29th, January, 1804, he wrote to Malcolm :—

"If Gwalior belonged to Scindhia, it must be given up; and I acknowledge that whether it did or did not, I should be inclined to give it to him. I declare that when I view the treaty of peace and its consequences, I am afraid it will be imagined that the *moderation of the British Government in India has a strong resemblance to the ambition of other Governments.*"

In another letter to Major Malcolm, dated 11th February, 1804, he wrote :—

"In fact, my dear Malcolm, I see very clearly that I have made two very good treaties of peace, but I have not influence to carry them into execution in any of their stipulations; and *there is no person about the Governor-General to take an enlarged view of the state of our affairs, and to resist the importunities of the local authorities to force on the treaties a construction which will tend to the increase of their own petty power and authority.*"

Again on the 17th March, 1804, he wrote to Major Malcolm :—

"The fair way of considering this question is, that a treaty broken is in the same state as one never made : and when that principle is applied to this case, it will be found that Scindhia, to whom the possessions belonged, before the treaty was made, and by whom they have not been ceded by the treaty of peace, or by any other instrument, ought to have them.

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"In respect to the policy of the question, * * *I would sacrifice Gwalior, or every frontier of India, ten times over, in order to preserve our credit for scrupulous good faith,* and the advantages and honor we gained by the late war and the peace; and we must not fritter them away in arguments drawn from overstrained principles of the laws of nations, which are not understood in this country. *What brought me through many difficulties in the war, and the negotiations for peace? The British good faith, and nothing else.*"

The sentences put in italics in the above extracts show the real state of mind of General Wellesley towards his brother's statesmanship. General Wellesley despaired of success in any future warfare, because he knew that no other native power or chief of India would trust the English, or be imposed upon or deceived by their fraud or false promises. These thoughts dispirited and disgusted General Wellesley. On the 30th March, 1804, he wrote to Major Malcolm :—

"I declare that I am dispirited and disgusted with this transaction beyond measure; however, I can say no more on it. The orders are called final; but my public letters, * * show my opinion of it."

Again, on the 13th April, 1804, he wrote to Malcolm :—

"I am disgusted beyond measure with the whole concern; and I would give a large sum to have had nothing to do with the treaties of peace, and if I could now get

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rid of all anxiety upon the subject. All parties were delighted with the peace, but the demon of ambition appears now to have pervaded all; and each endeavours, by forcing constructions, to gain as much as he can."

In such a state of mind, it was not to be expected of General Wellesley, that he would be an enthusiast in the war with Holkar.

General Wellesley was at this time much depressed in mind on account of the news he had received from England respecting his staff appointment in India. In his letter dated April 23, 1804, he wrote to General Lake:—

"It is with great reluctance that at a time like the present I trouble you upon a subject relating only to myself; but I hope that the extraordinary circumstances which have induced me to trouble you, will be my excuse.

"Above a year and a half have now elapsed since my promotion to the rank of Major-General was announced in India, and since Lieut-General Stuart unsolicited by me, in a manner most gratifying to my feelings, recommended to the Government of Fort St. George, that I should be appointed to the staff of that Presidency. Since that period accounts have reached England that I had been appointed to the staff in the manner to which I have above alluded, and that I had the command of a body of troops employed in this country. From recent appointments made I judge that the staff in India must have been under discussion lately, and that my appointment must have drawn the attention of his royal Highness the Commander-in-Chief, and of his Majesty; but I find that no confirmation has been made or notice taken of this appointment. * * * * *

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"I am therefore upon the whole very anxious to return to Europe; and I have to request your Excellency's permission to do so. If I should obtain it, I propose to resign the appointments which I hold under the Government of Fort St. George, when an opportunity will offer for my return".

Of course, General Wellesley did not immediately leave India for England, but it is evident that he could not throw his heart and soil into the military operations which the Governor-General had ordered against Holkar. However, he tried to attack Holkar's possessions in the Deccan. He was averse to move the troops from the Deccan. On the 20th April, 1804, he wrote to Major Malcolm:—

"The troops to the southward shall do everything that is possible. But the General (Lake) forgets the nature of our tenure, and our present state in the Deccan; the distance we are from Holkar; * * * * * *I cannot venture to move the troops from the Deccan;* *"

The words put in italics in the above extract show that the real motive which prompted General Wellesley was based on political considerations. At that time Colonel Murray had been in command of British troops in Guzerat. General Wellesley instruced him to move on and attack Holkar's dominions and penetrate into Indore. He wrote:—

"With your Europeans, and the remainder of your force, and the Raja's cavalry, I should wish you to pene-

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trate towards Indore, where you would be joined by a large proportion of Scindhia's army, and very probably I should be in communication with you with a corps from this quarter.

"According to this plan, we ought to be hanged if we do not get the better of Holkar in a very short time."

The plan of operations against Holkar with which General Wellesley furnished Colonel Murray is a long one and there is no necessity of making any extracts from it here.

General Wellesley was at that time in Bombay; he marched out of Bombay with the intention of besieging Chandore. But he met with so many difficulties in his march, that he postponed the idea of besieging Chandore till the commencement of the rains. In the meanwhile he received orders from the Governor-General to immediately proceed to Calcutta. The Court of Directors in England had severely criticised the Marquess Wellesley's wars and treaties of subsidiary alliance with Indian Princes. It was necessary to answer these despatches and also to arrange for the government of the territories ceded to the English in consequence of the operations of the Treaties of subsidiary alliance. General Wellesley's presence in Calcutta was required for answering the Court of Directors' despatches and suggest the settlement of certain political and military questions which

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had taxed the ingenuity of the Governor-General and his Council.

Accordingly General Wellesley left the Deccan, handing over the command of the troops to Lieut.-Colonel Wallace. From this time forward, General Wellesley altogether disappeared from the scene of battlefields in India. He had no more occasion to wield the sword against any other Indian prince. The few months that he spent in India were spent in either writing memorandums on the pressing political and diplomatic questions of the day or administering the State of Mysore as Governor of Seringapatam. Thus passed away from the military history of India General Wellesley to whom should be given the credit of breaking the back of the Marathas by base intrigues, low cunning and foul conspiracies.

To parade his disinterestedness in the war against Holkar, the Governor-General had given out that it was

> "not his intention, in the event of the reduction of Holkar's power, to take any share of the possessions of the Holkar family for the Company. Chandore and its dependencies and vicinity, will probably be given to the Peishwa; and the other possessions of Holkar, situated to the south of the Godavery, to the Subadar of the Deccan; all the remainder of the possessions of Holkar will accrue to Scindhia, provided he shall exert himself in the reduction of Jeswunt Rao Holkar.' (*Mill,* Vol. VI. p. 400).

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That portion of the map of India which now represents Holkar's dominion would have been by this time colored red, had the English succeeded in annihilating the power of Jeswunt Rao Holkar in 1804.

The dishonesty of the Governor-General regarding his intention of dividing Holkar's possessions amongst the Powers of the Deccan has been very ably exposed by Mr. James Mill (Vol. VI. pp. 399-401).

"In his despatch to the Secret Committee of the Court of Directors, dated 15th of June, 1804, the Governor-General says: 'Jeswunt Rao Holkar being justly considered as an adventurer, and as the *usurper* of the *rights* of his brother Cashee Rao Holkar—consistently with the principles of justice, no arrangement could be proposed between the British Government and Jeswunt Rao Holkar, involving the formal sanction of the British Government to that chieftain's *usurpation,* and to the exclusion of Cashee Rao Holkar from *his hereditary dominions.*' Yet these very dominions, thus declared to belong to Cashee Rao, the Governor-General had already resolved, without a shadow of complaint against Cashee Rao, to take, and give away to other persons * * * * In lieu of 'his hereditary dominions,' which it was not pretended that he had done anything to forfeit to the British Government, 'it will be necessary,' says the Governor-General in a subsequent paragraph, 'to make *some* provision for Cashee Rao, and for such of the legitimate branches of the family as may not be concerned in the violation of the public peace, or in the crimes of Jeswunt Rao Holkar.' "

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"The motive which led the Governor-General to decline a portion of the territory of Holkar for the Company, immediately after having taken for it so great a portion from Scindhia; and to add so largely to the dominions of Scindhia, immediately after having so greatly reduced them, is somewhat mysterious, if viewed through the single medium of national good; but is sufficiently intelligible, if we either suppose, that he already condemned the policy of his former measures, and thought an opposite conduct very likely to pass without observation; or, that, still approving the former policy, he yet regarded escape from the imputation of making war from the love of conquest, as a greater good, in the present instance, than the territories declined."

Of course, it was pure and simple hyprocisy on the part of the Governor-General to show this disinterestedness, which seems to us more apparent than real. The Marquess Wellesley would have certainly exacted some compensations from the Peishwa, the Nizam and Scindhia for allowing them to have a division of Holkar's possessions. It will be remembered that the Nizam had been granted a portion of the territories conquered from Tippoo Sultan in 1799. We have already stated how the English subsequently absorbed this territory by imposing on the Nizam the Supplementary Treaty of Subsidiary Alliance. So the grant of a portion of Tippoo's dominion to the Nizam was nominal and not real.

That duplicity, hypocrisy, intrigue, fraud and lying were the weapons offensive and defensive with

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this Governor-General has been adverted to over and over again. So his show of disinterestedness was merely a bait to make Scindhia and others assist the English in crushing Holkar and then not to award them any of Holkar's possessions on some ground of alleged misconduct. Before the war with Tippoo Sultaun had broken out, the Governor-General had promised the Peishwa a share in the territory conquered from Tippoo. But the readers need not be reminded how the Peishwa had been deceived by the Marquess Wellesley.

The Governor-General was at this moment particularly anxious to appease Scindhia. He knew that he had wronged and injured the latter in many ways. His last act regarding Gwalior was a flagrant piece of injustice. In vain General Wellesley and Major Malcolm beseeched the Governor-General to restore Gwalior to Scindhia. To Major Malcolm, the Marquess Wellesley wrote on the 10th April, 1804:—

"It may be hoped, that appearance of so many causes of discontent, concurring to disturb the temper of Scindhia's councils, may alarm me for the stability of the peace, and may terrify me into the cession of Gwalior and Gohud, and into a general system of concession and submission, conformably to Major Malcolm's principles. In this expectation, Scindhia's advisers and friends will be disappointed, they will not move me as easily as they have shaken Major

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Malcolm. I am perfectly ready to renew the war to-morrow, if I find that the peace is not secure."

He was no doubt perfectly ready to renew the war, because he knew very well that Scindhia was surrounded with traitors in his camp. General Wellesley writing to Major Shawe (Private Secretary to the Governor-General), on the 26th February, 1804, said:—

"I have no apprehension of any future foreign wars. Indeed no foreign powers now remain; even if Scindhia should not come into the defensive alliance, *we have got such a hold in his Durbar, by the treaty of peace, that if ever he goes to war with the Company, one half of his chiefs and of his army will be on our side.*"

The words put in italics in the above passage distinctly show how Scindhia's ministers had been bribed and corrupted by the English. One of the objects for which the Marquess Wellesley had declared the wars against Tippo and the Maratha confederates was to oblige them to part with the services of European military adventurers. But his brother, General Wellesley, was of another opinion. He thought it would be better for the Maratha princes to engage the services of these European adventurers to train their artillery and infantry. On the 18th November, 1803, he wrote to Major Shawe:—

"It appears, however, that the Governor-General is desirous that they should not have any Europeans at all.

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This prohibition will go to their having no infantry or artillery, and this is a point which I think deserves consideration. * * *

"I have no doubt whatever but that the military spirit of the nation has been destroyed by their establishment of infantry and artillery, * * ; at all events it is certain that those establishments, however formidable, afford us a good object of attack in a war with the Marathas and that the destruction of them contributes to the success of the contest * * * *

"* * * If there were no infantry in a Maratha army, their cavalry would commence those predatory operations for which they were formerly so famous; * * *

"On this ground, therefore, I think that they should be encouraged to have infantry rather than otherwise. As, however, the Governor-General has given a positive opinion upon this subject, I shall make a demand in conformity to his wishes: but this shall be the last of my demands, in hopes that I may hear further from you on the subject, before the peace should be concluded."

It would seem that the Governor-General agreed with the view of General Wellesley and did not raise any objection to Scindhia's entertaining the services of European military adventurers. Amongst these men, the members of the Filose family occupied many responsible military posts under Scindhia. The well-known Jean Baptiste Filose was at this time, the actual, if not the nominal commander-in-chief of Scindhia's army. But it is a significant fact that he never rendered any assistance to Scindhia in his war

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with the English. There are good grounds to suspect, that this adventurer was in the pay of the English. Dowlut Rao Scindhia suspecting his loyalty and fidelity once placed him under arrest, but it is a pity that he did not follow the example of Jeswunt Rao Holar in executing this faithless foreign adventurer.

Knowing the large number of traitors by whom he was surrounded, Scindhia had no mind to go again to war with the English. He had to submit to the Governor-General's arbitrary act of injustice and spoliation regarding Gwalior. In the postscript to their despatch to the Secret Committee of the Court of Directors dated 15th June, 1804, the Governor-General and his councillors wrote:—

> "The Governor-General in Council has the satisfaction to apprize your honorable Committee, that * * * Dowlut Rao Scindhia (has) formally renounced all claim to the district of Gohud and to the fortress of Gwalior, * * * ."

It was convenient for the Governor-General to connive at the fact that Scindhia had been unjustly made to 'formally renounce all claim to the district of Gohud and to the fortress of Gwalior.'

Having inflicted this wound on Scindhia, the Governor-General tried to apply the balsam, by holding out the promise of making over the possessions of Holkar provided he would help the English

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in their unjust war on that Maratha prince. *Nolens volens,* Scindhia had to carry out the order of the Marquess Wellesley. For this purpose, he detached Bapu Scindhia and Jean Baptiste Filose to carry fire and sword into Holkar's dominion. Filose took Ashta, Sehore, Bhilsa and other places in Malwa which had formerly belonged to Holkar.

But so far General Lake was not able to gain any advantage over Holkar. He had depended on General Wellesley's marching from the Deccan and crushing Holkar. But when Lake discovered that General Wellesley was unable to do so, he seems to have lost heart. Dating his letter to Lieutenant-General Stuart, Bombay, 17th March, 1804, Major-General Wellesley wrote:—

"In case of the war with Holkar, the Deccan would not be the scene of the operations. The contest would be on the frontiers of Hindustan and Guzerat; and, excepting to lay siege to Chandore, there would be nothing to do in the Deccan. * * *

"It will not answer to march the troops from the Deccan into Hindustan. If the troops go north of Chandore, fifty Holkars will start up in all parts of the territories of the Peishwa and of the Soubah of the Deccan; and it would be a most difficult operation to get through the hills between the Nerbudda and the Taptee. * * "

Again writing to Major Malcolm on the 20th April, 1804, General Wellesley wrote:—

"Your letters of the 13th and 14th contain much im-

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portant intelligence. The most important of any is that General Lake cannot quit Hindustan, to the southward to defeat Holkar.

"The troops to the southward shall do everything that is possible. But the General forgets the nature of our tenure, and our present State in the Deccan; the distance we are from Holkar; and the difficulty, amounting almost to an impossibility, of subsisting an army to the north of Poona, owing to famine. I can certainly take Chandore, at least I think so; and I will do everything else that I can. But I cannot venture to move the troops from the Deccan; * * * * *

"Supposing that matters remain as they are, it is my opinion that General Lake ought to move upon Holkar with all celerity, leaving in Hindustan a large proportion of his infantry, with some of his cavalry, * * * Having thus provided for the security of Hindustan, he should follow Holkar, and push him as hard as he can. * * *

"But if General Lake be tied down in Hindustan it stands to reason that we have no means of pushing Holkar, or of bringing the war to a close, unless I should be able to get to the north, of which, at present, I do not see the smallest prospect. Indeed, unless General Lake follows Holkar our situation will be very unpleasant * * ."

But, as has been so often said before, General Lake was not an able tactician. When he knew that he could not depend on General Wellesley for assisting him in the war, he was much dispirited. In his letter to the Marquess Wellesley, marked 'Private' and dated May 12th, 1804, he wrote:—

"It appears by the letter which will be forwarded to

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your Excellency by this Dawk, that General Wellesley thinks it will be impossible for the army from Poona to act until the rains, or that the army from Guzerat can do much till then. I understand, during the rainy season in the quarter the army would have to act, that it is almost impossible to move. In fact, an army in this country cannot act in the rainy season. Your Lordship will perhaps stare at reading this after what passed in last rainy season, but it must be recollected that such a season has not been known for years, as we had not seven days rain I believe from the time we left Cawnpore until the surrender of Agra. The natives, who are extremely superstitious, say that God Almighty ordered the dry season for the purpose of our conquering Hindostan, and hold that language to this moment, saying that nothing can stand against the British, as God fights for them. I do most sincerely agree with them, as our successes have been beyond all parallel, and must have had the assistance of an invisible hand. * * *

If it was possible for the Guzerat army to do anything before the rains set in, great advantage might be derived from it, * * Should that army advance, and be stopped by the rains, the consequence would be most 'unpleasant'. I therefore fear we must desist from any active operations during that season."

Lake's victories over Scindhia's forces in Hindustan during the year 1803, were to a very large extent brought about by his successful intrigues with Scindhia's treacherous foreign officers. Unfortunately for Lake, Holkar had got rid of all his foreign officers. So there was no chance for him to

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intrigue with Holkar's men. However, it should not be supposed that the English desisted from opening a campaign of intrigues and conspiracies against Holkar. Ameer Khan was still, to all outward appearances, a partizan of Holkar. It was with him that they intrigued. Of course, the English had been trying since a long time past to detach Amir Khan from Holkar. The manner in which the Nizam was advised by them to engage the services of Amir Khan has been already referred to. Although, Amir Khan then did not join the Nizam, it is not improbable that he was all the time in the pay of the English. At least the latter never ceased intriguing with him. Before they had formally gone to war with Holkar, they had left no stone unturned to corrupt Ameer Khan. Dating his letter from Poona, 2nd March, 1804, General Wellesley wrote to Major Malcolm :—

> "Mercer is in treaty with Meer Khan; and if he should draw him off from Holkar, there is an end of the latter."

The English succeeded in converting Ameer Khan into a traitor in Holkar's camp, for although Ameer Khan never left outwardly the service of Holkar, yet he was in the pay or at all events in the interest of the English. It is not improbable that the disasters which befell Holkar, were in no small measure due to the treachery of Ameer Khan.

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Although the Commander-in-Chief succeeded in inducing the Governor-General to declare war on Holkar, yet, when he discovered the difficulties which stared him in the face, his heart failed him. His letter, dated the 12th May, 1804, to the Governor-General, extracts from which have already been given above seems to have made the Marquees Wellesley change his decision regarding the war with Holkar. On the 25th May, 1804, the Marquess Wellesley wrote a 'most secret and confidential' letter to General Lake. He wrote:—

"I have the honor to transmit to your Excellency a copy of notes intended to form the basis of instructions which will speedily be forwarded to your Excellency, to Major-General Wellesley, and to the Governments of Fort St. George and Bombay. These notes will apprize your Excellency of my views with regard to the general distribution of the British troops throughout India in the actual state of affairs. * * *

"The great advantage to be derived by relieving the finances of India from the burthen of maintaining the subsisting military establishment in the field will induce your Excellency to effect every possible reduction of expense which may be compatible with the security of our dominions in Hindustan.

"It is not my intention, under any circumstances of the present moment, to authorize any augmentation to the military establishments under any of the Presidencies."

It was pecuniary consideration combined with the difficulties of the campaign against Holkar

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pointed out by General Lake in his letter of the 12th May, 1804, which decided the Governor-General to abandon the war on that Maratha chief. His 'Notes of instructions' commenced as follows:—

"Holkar's force having been compelled to retire from the North-Western frontier of Hindustan, and no prospect appearing of danger to our possessions in that quarter during the approaching season, no reason appears to require the continuance of the Commander-in-Chief's army in the field, for the mere purpose of security to our territories.

"It appears that war against Holkar cannot be prosecuted with advantage at present by the army under the Commander-in-Chief.

"It appears that at present war against Holkar cannot be prosecuted with advantage either by the forces under the immediate command of Major-General Wellesley, or by the subsidiary force at Hyderabad, and that the forces from Guzerat cannot advance with safety to the internal tranquility of that country, or without hazard of suffering in their progress towards Holkar's possessions by the general distress of the country.

"It appears that Holkar's army and resources diminish daily, and that his reputation has suffered from his precipitate flight. * * *

"In any of these cases it is unnecessary and unadvisable that any part of the British army should attempt, in the present season, to advance further towards the central or southern parts of Hindustan. * * *

"With these views orders will be transmitted to the Commander-in-Chief, to Major-General Wellesley, and to the Governments of Fort St. George and Bombay respectively, to the following effect:—

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Here follow instructions to withdraw the armies from the field. (Wellesley's Despatches, iv. 68-71).

But before the issue of these instructions by the Governor-General, the Commander-in-Chief had thrown away a golden opportunity to amicably settle matters with Holkar. On the 8th of May, General Lake received a letter from Holkar in which the latter offered to send a duly authorized person "to settle everything amicably." But the Commander-in-Chief was then thirsty of blood. He did not lend an ear to Holkar's proposal. He replied:—

"When I wrote you, formerly, that Vakeels might be sent to confirm a friendship, conditions were specified, which you have not any way fulfilled; but have acted directly contrary to them. This has forced the British Government to concert, with its allies, the necessary measures for subverting a power, equally inimical to all. This has been resolved upon. You will percieve that I cannot now enter into any bonds of amity with you, without consulting the allies of the British Government."

Had the Commander-in-Chief then tried to come to terms with Holkar, the English would have been spared the humiliation and disasters which Holakr inflicted on them. When the Governor-General ordered the withdrawal of the armies from the field, it was found impossible to do so. Events had taken place which seriously compromised the prestige of the English in India.

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On the 28th May, 1804, General Lake wrote a 'private' letter to the Marquess Wellesley, an extract from which only is published in the Despatches of the Marquees Wellesley. In this letter, he expressed his opinion regarding the disaster which had befallen the English in Bundelkhund. Colonel Fawscett was commanding Bundelkhund. On the 22nd May, 1804, he wrote to the Adjutant-General a letter in which he described his very critical situation in Bundelkhund. From his letter, it would seem, that although Ameer Khan was in treaty with the English he did not cease plundering provinces which then owed allegiance to them.* From camp at

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* This surmise of Colonel Fawcett was not correct. Ameer Khan was now in the pay of the English and consequently he could not have attacked them. That such was the fact, even the Governor-General and his councillors admitted. The 93rd paragraph of the despatch dated 15th June, 1804, forwarded to the Honorable the Secret Committee of the Court of Directors by the Governor-General in Council, runs as follows:—

"The party of predatory horse was originally stated to be fifteen or twenty thousand in number, and to be commanded by *Ameer Khan, formerly a partizan of Jeswunt Rao Holkar*. From information, however, subsequently received, there is every reason to believe that this party of predatory horse did not exceed five thousand, that they did not belong to Ameer Khan, and that the predatory incursion had no connection with the movements of Jeswunt

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Kooch, on 22nd May, Col. Fawcett wrote to the Adjutant-General :—

"At two o'clock this morning, Hurcarrahs came in with intelligence of the enemy being on their march towards this camp in great force, commanded by Meer (Amir) Khan in person; as the Hurcarrahs reported the enemy to be within three miles of camp, the whole troops were immediately got under arms ; * * *

"As it occurred to me that Captain Smith's Detachment was opposed to some risk, if the enemy went against it, I despatched a mounted trooper about half-past two o'clock in the morning, to order Captain Smith to return with his detachment to this Camp immediately. * * * * Captain Smith reports, that just as he had despatched his note in the morning, the village in which the attack against the fort was preparing was surrounded suddenly with immense bodies of horse; firing was heard in the village, which, after a short time entirely ceased; and by a man who escaped from the village, and came to Captain Smith's Camp, which was distant from the village about half a mile, he learned that the detachment in the village, consisting of two companies of Sepoys, fifty European artillery, fifty gun lascars, with two 12-pounders, two howitzers, one 6-pounder, and twelve tumbrils, were entirely taken by the enemy, and the men and officers all cut to

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Rao Holkar, but was a mere incursion of vagrant banditti for the purpose of obtaining subsistence by plunder."

The words put in italics in the above passage clearly show how Ameer Khan was hunting with the hound and running with the hare. He was a traitor in the camp of Holkar.

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pieces. * * * This is a most severe loss, and much as I lament it, both in a public and private point of view, I fear the ill consequences arising from the accident will prove very serious." (Wellesley's Despatches, IV. 72-73).

The humiliation and disgrace which this disaster inflicted on the English were to be wiped out at any cost. General Lake in his letter of the 28th May, 1804, wrote to the Governor-General:—

"This unfortunate business in Bundelkhand is very distressing; * * * * * * *

"By Colonel Powell's illness, and the death of Colonel Polhill, the command of the detachment in Bundelkhand devolved to Colonel Fawcett, events not to have been foreseen; and had it devolved to any other man in the army, this dreadful event could not have happened I do really think. With four battalions of sepoys and 450 Europeans, to have suffered these guns to have been carried away does seem most extraordinary. * * * I have ordered Colonel Fawcett to resign his command to Lieut.-Colonel Wittit. * * *

"I really thought I had left a most ample force for the protection of Bundelkhand against any number of irregular horse whatever. * * "

In reply to this letter, the Governor-General wrote to General Lake on the 8th June, 1804:—

"It was impossible to anticipate the flagrant misconduct by which the honor of the British arms has been disgraced, and the interests of the British Government hazarded, by an officer, furnished with such ample means of maintaining both.

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"It is difficult to calculate the extent of the evil consequences which may result from this unparalleled accident. * * * * * * *

"In consequence of the state of affairs in Bundelkhand, it appears to be necessary to apprize your Excellency of my opinion that the arrangements stated in my instructions of the 25th May, 1804, must be postponed, and every possible effort and exertion must be made to reduce Jeswunt Rao Holkar, and the predatory chiefs connected with him, * * * * "

At the same time, he authorized General Lake "to place Lieut.-Colonel Fawcett in arrest, and to bring him to immediate trial before a general court-martial."

On the 30th May, 1804, the Governor-General wrote to his brother, General Wellesley:—

"Since the date of my letter of the 16th of April, I have received, through the commander-in-chief, and from you, the despatches * * on the subject of eventual operations against Jeswunt Rao Holkar.

"In consequence of the intelligence contained in your despatches, and those of the Commander-in-Chief, I have issued the notes of instructions, which were forwarded to you under date the 25th of May. You will be pleased to consider the instructions contained in these notes to supersede those contained in my despatch of the 16th of April, 1804.

"The instructions * * * of my letters of the 16th of April, 1804, are become unnecessary in the present moment. * * * * * *

"Under these circumstances, my expectation is that you may be enabled immediately after having issued your

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orders for the execution of the plan contained in my instructions of the 25th of May, 1804, to proceed to Fort William * * for the purpose of communicating with me and with the Commander-in-Chief upon the various and important political and military questions now depending in India, and bearing an intimate relation to your political commission and military command."

General Wellesley was only too glad to leave the Deccan where his position had been compromised by the Governor-General not keeping faith with Scindhia and the Rajah of Berar regarding the interpretation of certain articles of the treaties which had been negotiated by him. As said before, he handed over the command of the troops in the Deccan to Lieutenant-Colonel Wallace, and proceeded to Calcutta. But he was unable to carry out the instructions of the Governor-General as regards the withdrawal of the troops from the field, or prohibit Colonel Murray from advancing on to Malwa. On the receipt of the Governor-General's instructions of the 25th May, 1804, General Wellesley addressed a letter to Major Shawe, Private Secretary to the Marquess Wellesley. The letter is dated from camp at Chinchore, 20th June, 1804. He wrote:—

"I am carrying into execution, in some degree, the instruction of the 25th May, reducing as far as possible the expense without diminishing the efficiency of the troops; * * *

"Colonel Murray is, I hope, already in Malwa, and

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I have not recalled him, for reasons which I think will be thought sufficient. * * * *

"I hope to be able to quit the army on the day after to-morrow. * * * "

So a few days after penning the letter from which extracts are given above, General Wellesley left the Deccan for good. But his decision not to recall Colonel Murray was a wise one, for, as stated before, the Governor-General had issued orders suspending his instructions of the 25th May, 1804. Writing to General Lake on the 24th June, 1804, General Wellesley said:—

"I have not recalled Colonel Murray from Malwa; on the contrary, I have urged Mr. Duncan, under whose orders he falls, to allow him to continue his operations in Malwa according to my instructions of the 7th May. * * *

"I am of opinion that no inconvenience will result from these arrangements; on the contrary, the troops will be relieved from great destress and inconvenience; * * * "

So war was now undertaken in right earnest against Holkar. There were three principal armies with several detachments in the field to operate against Holkar and reduce his power. The main army was in Hindustan under General Lake. The army in the Deccan was under Lieut.-Colonel Wallace; and that in Guzerat under Colonel Murray. Besides these armies, fraud and intrigues were reducing Holkar's power.

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CHAPTER XXXIV.

THE PROGRESS OF THE WAR WITH HOLKAR AND HUMILIATION OF THE BRITISH.

The war with the Maratha confederates was merely a child's play compared with that with Holkar. Generals Lake and Wellesley seemed to have swept everything before them when they levied war on Scindhia and the Raja of Berar. The capture of Ahmednagar or that of Coel was accomplished without any bloodshed. It has been over and over again repeated that the ease with which Lake and Wellesley deprived Scindhia of his fortresses and territories was, in no small measure, due to the fact of the foreign servants in the employ of Scindhia having turned traitors and betrayed their master. The difficulty which the Commander-in-Chief experienced in getting the better of Holkar was that he could not intrigue with any of the dependants and servants of the latter, since very wisely Holkar had got rid of all his foreign servants, who possessed such fine sense of gratitude and honour as not to have scrupled to betray their master whose salt they had eaten.

But it should not be understood that the English

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ceased intriguing and conspiring against Holkar. General Lake was a past master in the nefarious art of intrigues. He opened the campaign of intrigue against Holkar. Amir Khan had been bought over, and as to that perfidious Afghan soldier of fortune, gold symbolized the most perfect bliss on this earth, so he did not scruple to hunt with the hound and run with the hare.

The British had not anticipated that the war with Holkar would assume such serious proportions as subsequent events proved. They were at their wit's end to bring the war to a successful termination. But how they were disappointed in this, we shall have occasion to show.

Before the Governor-General had issued his note of instructions of the 25th May, 1804, for the withdrawal of troops from the field, General Lake had sent a detachment under the command of Lieut. Colonel Don to take possession of the fort of Tonk-Rampoora. Colonel Don did not experience much difficulty in executing the orders of the Commander-in-Chief. On the 16th May, 1804, the fort of Rampoora was very easily taken by him.

But the subsequent operations of the troops under the command of British officers hardly brought any credit to them. Disasters after disasters overtook them and the English seem to have sincerely wished that they had not commenced hostilities against

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Holkar. After the disgraceful conduct of Lieut. Colonel Fawcett which led the Governor- General to change his mind regarding the prosecution of the war with Holkar, General Lake tried his best to retrieve the disaster. Brigadier-General Monson, in whose ability and skill he reposed fullest confidence, was detached to pursue Holkar. With this object in view, the general was given a large army and every facility to carry out to a successful termination the project of the Governor-General and the Commander-in-Chief.

Dating his letter from Fort William, July 9th, 1804, the Marquess Wellesley assured Lord Castlereagh,

> "that every appearance promises durable peace in India. The necessity of repelling Holkar's banditti from the frontier of Hindustan, and of reducing him to a peaceful conduct will not lead to any serious interruption of peace, *and will probably tend to consolidate our connection with Scindhia.* The Commander-in-Chief, with the greater part of the main army in Hindustan, is returned to the cantonment of Cawnpore, and my attention is now directed to the desirable object of withdrawing the whole army from the field, and of reducing the military charges."

But the Governor-General was disappointed in all his hopes. The war with Holkar did not tend to consolidate the connection of the English with Scindhia as, from the words put in italics in the

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above extract, the Marquess Wellesley had expected. There was no immediate prospect of reducing the military charges, and moreover the Commander-in-Chief was not allowed to remain long in the cantonment of Cawnpore.

Colonel Monson, as said before, was detached to pursue Holkar. But that officer's heart quailed at the sight of the large force which Holkar had mustered. He reported this circusmtance to the Commander-in-Chief as well as the Governor-General. The latter on the receipt of this despatch from Colonel Monson forwarded to General Lake "Notes of Instructions" on the 28th July, 1804. The Governor-General labelled these "Notes" as "most secret and confidential." He wrote:—

"it appears by the last despatches from the Commander-in-Chief, and from Lieut.-Colonel Monson, that Jeswunt Rao Holkar has collected a very considerable force near the Mucundra Pass, and now commands in that position an army stated to consist of a large body of cavalry, a corps of regular infantry, and a large train of artillery. It is not probable that he will again separate this force, if he really possesses the means of keeping it together, * * *

"This state of circumstances presents a favorable opportunity for striking a decisive blow against Holkar's power and resources. No expectation can be entertained of any accommodation with Holkar as long as he shall remain in any degree of force. * * * It does not appear that either of the corps under the command of Colonel Murray, and of Lieut.-Colonel Monson, are sufficiently strong to

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encounter singly Holkar's force in the field. * * * It is also evident that as long as Holkar shall be enabled to maintain a superiority in the field, it will be impossible for the detachments under Colonel Murray and Lieut.-Colonel Monson, to effect a junction of their forces, and a protracted and expensive war may be expected to be the consequence of this system of operations.

"Under these circumstances it appears to be highly expedient to adopt immediate measures for the attack of Jeswunt Rao Holkar. The first step with a view to this desirable object is to reinforce either of the detachments under Colonel Murray or Lieut.-Colonel Monson, * * *

"From the distance of Colonel Murray's detachment from the troops in the Deccan, it will be impossible to reinforce him from that quarter; * * *. It appears, therefore, to be necessary to reinforce the detachment under Lieut.-Colonel Monson, * * *."

The Marquess Wellesley hardly finished these notes of instructions, when he received the intelligence of the disaster that had overtaken Colonel Monson. The last paragraph of these "Notes" runs as follows:—

"By a letter just received (Half past 4 o'clock, P.M.) from Lieut.-Colonel Lake to Captain Armstrong, dated 20th July, it appears that Colonel Monson's detachment was retreating before Holkar, and had quitted the Mucundra Pass.

"This is a most painful state of affairs. Nothing can retrieve our character but the most vigorous effort. I fear that all our exertions will now be too late to recover all we have lost."

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The Governor-General desired that the Commander-in-Chief should take the field in person, for he wrote :—

"The despatches received to-day seem to leave no hope of success unless the Commander-in-Chief can again take the field in person, and attack Holkar with vigour; in that case, all my apprehensions would be converted into a certainty of success."

It is necessary to describe in detail the nature of Lieut. Colonel Monson's disaster. It has already been stated before that the Commander- in-Chief had detached Monson to keep Holkar in check. The plan of the campaign was that Colonel Murray was to advance from Guzerat and Monson to proceed into Holkar's territory from the North . These two British officers, namely, Colonels Murray and Monson, were ultimately to unite their forces and conjointly operate against Holkar. Monson was junior to Colonel Murray in rank. Had the junction of the two forces taken place, the supreme command would have devolved on Colonel Murray. But this was an event which neither the Governor-General nor his unflinching supporter, the 'ruffian' Commander-in-Chief, desired. Monson had after all 'blue blood' in his veins, he belonged to the aristocracy, being the younger son of some British peer. In his 'most secret and confidential' notes of instructions for

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General Lake dated 28th July, 1804, the Governor-General wrote :—

"The Commander-in-Chief will also determine whether it may be necessary to send an officer of superior rank to take the command of the detachment to be employed against Holkar, * * *. This suggestion is entirely compatible with the greatest respect for the character and services of Lieut.-Colonel Monson, in whose approved zeal, courage, and skill, the Governor-General reposes the utmost confidence. In the prosecution, however, of active operations against Jeswunt Rao Holkar, the two detachments under Colonel Murray and Lieut.-Colonel Monson may effect a junction, and the chief command will then devolve upon Colonel Murray; and the Commander-in-Chief may probably consider the command of the united detachments to be too extensive for an officer of the rank of Colonel Murray."

The Commander-in-Chief had also foreseen the possibility of such a contingency and hence with the object that the chief command should not devolve upon Colonel Murray, he had nominated Lieut.-Colonel Monson, although junior to Colonel Murray, to the temporary rank of Brigadier-General. It was a flagrant act of nepotism.

Brigadier-General Monson entered Holkar's territory by the Mokundra pass on the first of July. On the evening of the second of July, a detachment from his force captured the fort of Hinglais-Gur by escalade. The force with which Brigadier-General Monson was furnished, consisted of five battalions

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of Sepoys, with artillery in proportion, and about 3,000 irregular horse—the latter divided into two bodies, the one commanded by the traitor named Lieutenant Lucan, and the other under the command of Bapoojee Scindhia, in the service of Dowlat Rao Scindhia. Thus the force under Brigadier-General Monson was quite ample to meet any emergencies. With this large force Monson continued his march towards the Chumbal until the 7th July, and had advanced about fifty miles beyond the Mokundra pass. News was brought to him of Holkar's crossing the river. At first he hoped that he would be able to attack Holkar's force with advantage before the latter had recovered from the confusion which the passage of the river would be sure to produce. He had further hoped to communicate with Colonel Murray, who was advancing from Guzerat towards Ujjain. But imagine his chagrin when he came to know that Colonel Murray intended to fall back on Guzerat and that he had only two days' grain in his camp.

It appeared necessary to Colonel Monson to retreat from Holkar's territory and so he determined to retire to the Mokundra pass. While it is easy to understand this retreat of Monson, that of Colonel Murray can not be so satisfactorily explained. But we should think his supersession might have had something to do with his want of energy and vigor

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in pushing on to Holkar's territory from the side of Guzerat.

Horace Hayman Wilson in a footnote to his edition of Mill's *History of India* (vi. p. 405) writes :—

"Monson's determination to retreat is affirmed by Ameer Khan to have been adopted by the treacherous advice of Bapoojee Scindhia, who was in secret understanding with Jeswunt Rao."

Much reliance can not and should not be placed on Ameer Khan's affirmations and statements. Ameer Khan's memoirs seem to have been inspired, if not actually dictated by the English, by whom he was granted the principality of Tonk as a reward for his treachery to Holkar. The memoirs were written after he had been granted the principality of Tonk. Hence no surprise need be felt that his statements should be such as would flatter the vanity of the English.

Even supposing that Monson determined to retreat on the advice of Bapoojee Scindhia, it does not speak much for the courage and generalship of Monson to have acted on the advice without weighing the *pros* and *cons* of the step he was taking. That Monson was not much of a tactician is borne testimony to by even his most ardent patron, General Lake, who said regarding him that it was extra-

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ordinary, "that a man, brave as a lion, should have no judgment or reflection." Whatever may be said by the English in explanation or extenuation of Monson's retreat, it appears to us that his retreat was due not a little to his cowardice and his sense of inability to meet Holkar in fair fight.

So Brigadier-General Monson began his retreat by sending off the whole of the baggage and stores to Soonarah, at four in the morning of the 8th July. He himself remained on the encamping ground till half past nine, when no enemy having appeared, he commenced his march. He left the irregular horse on the ground with orders to follow in half an hour, and afford the earliest information of Holkar's motions. Monson had retired about twelve miles when intelligence was brought that the irregular cavalry had been attacked and defeated by Holkar, and that traitor, once in the employ of Dowlut Rao Scindhia, named Lieut. Lucan, had been taken prisoner. How far Bapoojee Scindhia rendered assistance to Holkar in capturing Lieut. Lucan cannot be definitely stated. But when we remember the fact that the fall of the fort at Aligarh was due to the treachery of Lieut. Lucan, we should not consider Bapoojee Scindhia loyal and faithful to his master, if he were not to take advantage of the opportunity and to see the foreign traitor meet with his deserts. The fate of Lieut. Lucan was such as

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every traitor fully deserves. When Holkar attacked him, most of the horse he commanded, deserted him and he was thus easily taken prisoner and died of a bowel complaint at Kotah.

Brigadier-General Monson seems to have been so much dispirited and cowed down that in stead of trying to retrieve the disaster and march to the relief of the irregular horse and fight Holkar, he precipitately fled to the Mokundra pass, which he reached about noon on the 9th July. But this rapid retreat of Monson did not save him from the pursuit of Holkar. On the morning of the 10th a large body of Holkar's cavalry appeared and continually increased in numbers till noon of the 11th. Holkar was in command of the cavalry in person. He summoned Monson to surrender. This demand was rejected. Then Holkar, dividing his cavalry into three bodies, attacked Monson's detachment in front and flanks, but could not make much impression on them for want of artillery and guns. Of course cavalry alone is not of much avail against well-disciplined artillery and infantry. So Holkar prudently withdrew his troops in the evening and encamped at the distance of four miles to be beyond the range of fire of the English. Here he was joined by his infantry and guns, and it was supposed that he would renew the attack on the following morning.

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Monson, now thoroughly cowed down and being apprehensive of having his retreat cut off, determined on retiring to Kotah, which place he reached in two marches on the 12th. But here, not meeting with that reception from the Raja of Kotah which he had hoped, he left the place almost immediately and continued his march towards the Ganmuch ford on the Chumbal. On account of the heavy downpour of rain, the ford was impassable, until the following day (*i.e.*, 13th). On the 14th, Monson was obliged to halt to enable the troops to procure some grain. The whole of the detachment under Monson did not reach Rampoorah till the 29th July. Captain Grant Duff has very graphically described the miseries to which the men under General Monson were exposed since the commencement of the retreat. He writes (p. 590) :—

"On the 15th (July) he (Monson) resumed his march, but the guns sank so deep in the mud that they could not be extricated. The grain in the adjoining village was exhausted, retreat was now necessary to procure subsistence; the ammunition was therefore destroyed, and the guns were spiked and abandoned; but they were recommended to the care of the Raja of Boondee, who, although he could not save the guns, had the courage to maintain his engagements with the English in the face of the host of Holkar. On the 17th the troops reached the Chumbelee rivulet, which was not fordable, but Monson, on the ensuing day, sent his artillery men across on elephants, with orders to

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proceed to the fort of Rampoorah. Nearly ten days elapsed before the whole of the troops—some on elephants, some on rafts, and some by being sent to a ford farther down could cross this rivulet, so greatly was it swollen. During that time they sustained much privation; in different situations, they repulsed several persevering attacks which were made upon them by Holkar's cavalry; and a detachment of flank Companies, under Captain O'Donell, beat up the camp of a large body of the enemy on the evening of the 21st July, with great spirit and success. Many of the men were drowned in crossing the Chumbelee; but the most trying to the poor sepoys of all that they endured, was the loss of many of their wives and children, who, being in some instances necessarily left on the opposite bank till the last, were, in this helpless and unprotected state, in view and within hearing of their husbands, barbarously massacred by Bheels from the neighbouring hills who were in the interests of Holkar."

Such was the spirit of gallantry shown by the European General in suffering the helpless wives and children belonging to the men of the detachment under his command to be massacred by the enemy. The conduct of the Bheels, of course, cannot be too highly condemned. There was so much mismanagement and want of ordinary precautions that had Monson not been a protegé of the Governor-General and the Commander-in-Chief, he would have been court-martialled and cashiered. It will be remembered how the Marquess Wellesley authorized General Lake to bring Lieut. Colonel Fawcett before

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a general court-martial. But the faults or even crimes of Lieut.-Colonel Fawcett dwindle into insignificance when compared to those of Monson.

It may be asked why did not Holkar take advantage of the opportunity by pursuing and attacking the British. But it should be remembered that the incessant rain occasioned obstructions, and prevented him from cutting to pieces the troops under the command of the British officers. In his memorandum upon operations in the Maratha territory, General Wellesley had detailed his reasons for commencing a compaign against the Marathas during the rainy season. His reasons were:—

"First. The Maratha army is principally composed of cavalry, and their plan of operations against a British army would be to endeavour to cut off its communication with its rear, * * * As the rivers are not fordable, as there are no bridges, and no means of passing them excepting by basket boats, which it is difficult, and might be rendered impossible to procure, the fulness of the rivers operates as a barrier. It is certain, that the enemy cannot pass them in large numbers, and it is probable that they would not venture to throw across a small body, or rather, that they would not be able to prevail upon a small body to remain on a different side from the main body of their army."

Thus the rainy season prevented Holkar from pursuing the force under Monson. Every advantage, it will be seen, lay on the side of the British. Had Monson been a man of energy and skill, here was

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a golden opportunity for him to totally crush Holkar.

The news of Monson's retreat and the disastrous consequences attendant on it filled the mind of the Commander-in-Chief as well as of the Governor-General with alarm. The humiliation of the British in India was now quite unprecedented. Dating his letter, marked 'private', from Cawnpore, July 21st, 1804, Lieut.-General Lake wrote to the Marquess Wellesley :—

"It grieves me to have sent you any account which I know must vex and torment you, but I trust nothing serious can happen from the falling back of Monson's force. Holkar's cavalry is, I believe, most despicable, and his brigades, if my information is correct (which I think it is), are far from strong, the battalions, upon an average, not more than three hundred men; if complete, they amount only to four hundred and fifty each. Had Colonel Murray fortunately come on, Holkar would have been completely destroyed. * * * * The number of irregular horse is always exaggrated, ten or twelve thousand when dispersed in their sort of order appear a prodigious number. I think Holkar will not easily get his cavalry to attack our infantry again unless he brings his guns, which will retard him, and prevent his horse from doing much mischief. His guns will, in the end, be the cause of his ruin. His insolence is abominable. I think he cannot do us any immediate injury. * * * I lament most sincerely that our forbearance some months back prevented me from attacking, which, if we had done, he would to a certainty have been totally destroyed. * * * *Rest assured, my dear Lord, nothing

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shall be wanting on my part to prevent the glory of our late campaign being tarnished by any advantage that can be gained by this freebooter. He *certainly has not at present one man of power or consequence attached to him, and I think it will be in my power to prevent any one from joining him.* * * * "

As this letter of General Lake sheds much side-light on the war with Holkar, so the above extracts have been made from it. From this letter it is evident, that Holkar's force did not much exceed that of Monson, that the number of irregular horse of the former was much exaggerated, and that it was nothing short of cowardice on the part of Monson to have precipitately retreated before such an insignificant and undisciplined force as that of Holkar. We can also understand why Holkar did not pursue Monson ;—for the simple reason that his force was not large enough to have accomplished with success the pursuit. It is also evident from the letter of General Lake, extracts from which have been given above in italics, that he opened a campaign of intrigues against Holkar.

When the Governor-General became aware of the retreat of Brigadier-General Monson, he, as said before, desired the Commander-in-Chief to take the field in person. But before General Lake moved out of Cawnpore, where he had been staying since June, 1804, he had the mortification to hear of the fresh

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disasters that had overtaken Monson, and the latter's retreat on to Agra.

As said before, all the troops under Monson reached Rampoorah on the 29th July. He did not move from this place till the 22nd August. There is no sufficient explanation for this long delay on the part of Monson at Rampoora. He was joined here by two battalions of Sepoys, a body of irregular horse, four six-pounders, two howitzers, and a supply of grain, sent to his relief from Agra by General Lake as soon as he received intelligence of Monson's retreat. On the 22nd August, he left Rampoorah and commenced his retreat towards Kooshulgurh. His long delay at Rampoorah, not sufficiently explained anywhere, was according to General Lake a fatal mistake. His determination to retreat on to Kooshulgurh was based on his expectation to find sufficient supplies for his troops there, and also to be joined by six of Scindhia's battalions with 21 guns, under Sadashiva Bhow Bhaskur, the officer defeated by Holkar at Poona in October, 1802.

On the morning of the 22nd August, Monson reached the river Bannas. Here he was encamped on the banks of the river, which he was in hopes to be able to cross the following day. But the river was so much swollen as to be scarcely fordable for the largest elephants. Three boats were found, in which he ordered Captain Nicholl with six Com-

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panies of a regiment to cross and proceed immediately to Kooshulgurh, in charge of the treasure with his detachment. On the evening of the 23rd the whole of Holkar's cavalry came up, and pitched their camp about four miles from Monson ; on the morning of the 24th at day-light, finding the river fordable, Monson began to cross his baggage. At eight o'clock A.M., Holkar took possession of a large village on Monson's right. By twelve o'clock the whole of Monson's baggage with 4 battalions had crossed the river and had Monson been possessed of a little commonsense and proper ideas of military tactics, he would have allowed the remaining troops and himself to cross the river. Instead of doing that, he attempted an attack on Holkar. Although for a moment, the British seemed to have been victorious, yet Holkar in person charged with overpowering numbers, and the handful of sepoys under British officers was nearly annihilated. Holkar's irregular horse had also crossed the river and attacked Monson's baggage. Seeing no other course open and being thoroughly cowed down, Monson abandoned the baggage and such of his wounded and fatigued sepoys and followers as were unable to march with him, and precipitately retreated on to Kooshalgarh, which place he reached on the night of the 25th August.

Koosalgurh was in the territory of the Raja of Jeypoor. Scindhia's detachment under Sadashiva

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Bhow Bhaskur was here and would have co-operated with Monson's, but Scindhia and his officers and men had become quite disgusted with the British and instead of co-operating with them, they tried to harass and annoy them. Not finding Kooshalgurh a safe asylum either for himself or his men, Monson moved out of the place on the evening of the 26th August and prosecuted his retreat towards Agra, which was reached by the 31st August.

It is not necessary to mention the skirmishes which Monson and his troops under him had with Holkar's men during the retreat from Kooshalgurh. Fortunately for Monson, Holkar's men were not in sufficient force to reap the full advantage of the confusion and cowardice exhibited by Monson and the officers under him.

The position of the British at this moment in India was most critical. They had undertaken the war trusting that Scindhia would render them material assistance in their operations against Holkar. But Scindhia or at least his officers and men detached for co-operation with the British threw off all disguise and openly joined Holkar. There was so much disaffection in the country then under the rule of the British that Holkar received much help from many men of consequence in his expedition in Hindustan. Monson's troops had been so much disaffected and dispirited that they deserted him and joined Holkar.

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The loss sustained by the British on account of the cowardice and want of proper management of affairs by Monson was very heavy. Dating his letter marked 'private' from Cawnpore, Sept. 2nd, 1804, General Lake wrote to the Marquess Wellesley:—

"I will not at present say anything more upon this disgraceful and disastrous event, as my feelings are for many reasons too much agitated to enter into the misfortunes and causes of it. A finer detachment never marched, and sorry I am to say, that if this account of Lieutenant Anderson is correct, I have lost five battalions and six companies, the flower of the army, and how they are to be replaced at this day, God only knows. I have to lament also the loss of some of the finest young men and most promising in the army."

Referring to the desertion of the Sepoys, General Lake wrote on the 8th Sept., 1804, to the Marquess Wellesley:—

"I shall cause every possible enquiry to be made into the apparent disaffection, on the part of some of the corps, who formed the detachment, but I have the pleasure to assure your Lordship, that it does not appear to have been by any means extensive."

But it does not appear that any enquiry if made was ever published. Captain Grant Duff (p. 591), writes:—

"Of the cause of this partial disaffection there is no account afforded, * * * Unfortunately, Brigadier-General

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Monson did not know the sepoys; they had no confidence in him, nor he in them."

It seems that no enquiry was ever made into the causes of the disaffection ; nor any enquiry made to account for Monson's retreat. In his despatch to the Secret Committee of the Court of Directors of the East India Company, dated 24th March, 1805, the Governor-General in Council wrote :—

"The Governor-General in Council is also unable at this time distinctly to explain the causes of the retreat of Lieut.-Colonel Monson's detachment under circumstances of difficulty and distress. Those causes must be sought in the conduct and operations of the several detachments actively employed against the forces of Jeswunt Rao Holkar, which the Governor-General in Council is not yet enabled to state with accuracy and precision; the distance of the scene of action, and the necessity of accelerating the operations of the main body of the army, having precluded the possibility of completing any satisfactory investigation of the movements of those detachments. Every effort, however, will be employed to submit to your honourable Committee with the least practicable delay, all the details connected with such transactions as may now appear to be imperfectly related."

But from the published records so far it does not appear that the Secret Committee were ever furnished with the causes of Monson's retreat. It was the interest of the Marquess Wellesley and General Lake to screen Monson. On the 11th September,

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1804, the Governor-General wrote to General Lake:—

"* * from the first hour of Colonel Monson's retreat, I have always augured the ruin of that detachment, and if any part of it be saved, I deem it so much gain. From Colonel Blair's letter to Colonel Macan, I trust that the greater part of the detachment is arrived at Agra, but I fear my poor friend Monson is gone. Whatever may have been his fate, or whatever the result of his misfortunes to my own fame, I will endeavour to shield his character from obloquy, nor will I attempt the mean purpose of sacrificing his reputation to save mine. His former services and his zeal entitle him to indulgence; and *however I may lament or suffer for his errors, I will not reproach his memory if he be lost, or his character, if he survive.*"

The words put in italics in the above extract show the sentiment which the Marquess Wellesley entertained towards Monson. It could have been hardly expected of him to have taken Monson to task for the latter's misconduct in connection with the retreat. It was pure and simple hypocrisy, therefore, on his part to have promised the Secret Committee of the Court of Directors that he would institute enquiries regarding the causes of Monson's retreat.

In replying to the Governor-General's letter, extracts from which have been given above, General Lake wrote a letter marked 'Private' and dated Agra,

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Sept. 22nd, 1804. He commenced his letter as follows:—

"Your letter of the 11th instant reached me at this place this morning, and is most truly gratifying to my feelings. Your sentiments respecting Monson are noble, and like yourself, and are worthy of the great mind you possess. He is fortunately alive to answer for himself, it is a subject I do not wish to enter upon. I, like yourself, foresaw what would probably happen, and was in hopes I had taken precautions to prevent any further ill effects after his getting to Rampoorah, but alas! it was not to be. His remaining at that place was fatal."

Again in his 'private' letter, dated Secundra, Sept. 24th, 1804, General Lake wrote to the Marquess Wellesley:—

"Be assured I will do everything in my power to recover the late unfortunate disaster, and sincerely hope success will attend us; indeed, I have no doubt of it. * * Although you so nobly declare your determination to shield the character of Colonel Monson from obloquy, whatever may be the result of his misfortunes, to your own fame—here, my dear Lord, I must remark that whatever may be said upon the subject, you surely cannot be implicated in the business, as all blame ought to fall upon me for detaching the force in the first instance, when I thought I had selected corps with a man to command them who would have accomplished all my wishes, and obtained the end proposed. This being the case, I certainly become the responsible person in the first instance, and shall, upon every occasion, declare publicly and privately, both here and at home, that you had nothing to do with the march of that

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detachment, and that all censure for that measure must be attributed to me, and me alone, * * *. I stand perfectly at ease on that score, unless it may be said that I left too much to the discretion of Colonel Monson. All I wish to be understood is, that no blame in sending out that force can fall to your share but to myself who sent it. It has caused me many an uneasy moment, * * "

Under these circumstances, all attempts were directed to frustrate any impartial enquiry being made into the causes of the retreat.

The effects of the retreat were disastrous to the British, whose humiliation was, as said before, quite unprecedented.

British prestige in India had indeed fallen to a very low ebb, and it is necessary to go back to the First Maratha War to find a parallel to the heavy blow which had been given to their dominion in India. From Cape Comorin in the South to the banks of the Indus in the North, it was known that the ambitious designs of the English had been frustrated. Hundreds of soldiers commanded by British officers died from disease alone during this unfortunate campaign, and many more were lost during the retreat.

They had never thought that Holkar would be able to cause so much disaster and humiliation to them. Ever afterwards since the retreat, the very name of Holkar seems to have been one of

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terror to them. The Commander-in-Chief in his despatches ceased mentioning him by name but used to refer to him by such choice epithets as "the plunderer", "this monster", "the murderer" and such other phrases. Both the Governor-General and the Commander-in-Chief were bent on devising means to retrieve the disaster. The former in the course of his letter of the 11th September, 1804, wrote to General Lake:—

> We must endeavour rather to retrieve than to blame what is past, and under your auspices I entertain no doubt of success. Time, however, is the main consideration. Every hour that shall be left to this plunderer will be marked by some calamity; we must expect a general defection of the allies, and even confusion in our own territories, unless we can attack Holkar's main force immediately with decisive success. * * * I perfectly agree with you, that the first object must be the defeat of Holkar's infantry in the field, and to take his guns; * * * Holkar defeated, all alarm and danger will instantly vanish; * * * "

In the next chapter, we shall relate the critical position of the British in India at this moment and also the means devised by them to bring about the defeat of Holkar.

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CHAPTER XXXV.

SITUATION OF AFFAIRS, AND CONSPIRACIES AND INTRIGUES AGAINST HOLKAR.

It has already been said that Monson's retreat placed the British in the most critical and awkward position possible. Referring to this retreat, General Wellesley wrote:—"I tremble at the political consequences of that event." The Commander-in-Chief was ordered to take the field in person so that the English might have an early opportunity of wiping away the disgrace which they had suffered. The Governor General at the same time ordered his brother Major-General Wellesley, who was at that time in Calcutta, to immediately return to the Deccan and to resume the political and military command of the affairs there. General Wellesley left Calcutta in the beginning of October, 1804.

It is necessary here to relate in detail the critical position of the English in India at this period.

General Lake, as said so often before, boasted of a 'secret manner' of managing affairs. His secret manner consisted in bribing and corrupting officers and men in the employ of Sindhia and intriguing with them against their master. His successes in Northern

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India were to be accounted for in this manner of carrying on intrigues. He fed the minds of men with smooth, specious and false promises. But when the Doab, that is, that portion of Hindostan which lies between the rivers Jumna and Ganges, passed into the hands of the British, the inhabitants were quite undeceived. They found that they had changed King Log for King Stork. The unsympathetic British under the authority and guidance of General Lake committed all sorts of atrocities and excesses upon the non-Christian population of the Doab. General Lake, as said in another place, showed himself as a vile monster when Commander-in-Chief in Ireland. He does not seem to have much changed his nature in India. But what specially inspired the people of the Doab with hatred against the British was the indulgence of the latter in killing that inoffensive and useful animal, the cow. The great Akbar, than whom no other non-Hindu ruler of India better understood the feelings and prejudices of the Hindus, with his far-seeing statesmanship prohibited the Muhammadans from killing cows within his dominions. Even the latter-day effeminate and degenerate Moghul rulers, who by their misconduct and the re-imposition of that iniquitous poll-tax on the Hindus known as the *Jezia*, precipitated the downfall of the Muhammadan rule in India, tried to conciliate the feelings of the Hindus

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by refraining from killing the cow. For nearly 300 years or more, no cow had been killed in Hindostan for the sake of beef. But imagine the feelings of the Hindus when they found the British polluting their sacred city of Muttra by killing the cow,—an animal held in reverence by them and which had not been killed there by any beef-eater within the memory of the oldest men living. Their feelings were outraged and they naturally looked to the independent princes of India to deliver them from the bondage of the English.

Monson, smarting under the disgrace and humiliation inflicted on him by Holkar, discovered a correspondence that had been going on between Holkar and the Raja of Bhurtpore. Bhurtpore is a small principality in Bundelcund and its Raja is a Jat prince. The Jats had asserted their independence and founded the principality of Bhurtpore during the days of the decline and downfall of the Moghuls in India. The founder of the principality was Raja Soorajmull.

Bhurtpore was one of those states with which the British entered into an alliance in 1803 when they were going to war with Scindhia and the Raja of Berar. The Jat prince Raja Ranjit Singh was the ruler of Bhurtport at this time. He was not a statesman. Had he been so, he would not have been so easily prevailed upon by the English to conclude an alliance

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with them and helped them against Scindhia and the Raja of Berar. He does not even appear to have been an intelligent or energetic prince. This has been borne testimony to by General Lake himself. Writing to the Marquess Wellesley from Cawnpore on the 13th August, 1804, General Lake said :—

"From the meeting I had with Rajah Runjeet Singh in Camp, and from common report, I am inclined to believe that his character is by no means of that daring stamp as to induce him readily to pursue measures so fraught with danger to himself as his present conduct would appear to indicate. His son Koer Rundhere Singh, who was also in my Camp, is of a character equally indolent and devoid of ability."

A question here naturally arises whether the Rajah of Bhurtpore had been carrying on correspondence with Holkar to subvert the lately established power of the British. In the published Despatches of the Marquess Wellesley or of the Duke of Wellington, there is nothing to show, much less to prove, that the Rajah of Bhurtpore was carrying on any secret correspondence with Holkar detrimental to the English in India. Even the Marquess Wellesley does not seem to have been convinced of the so-called treachery of the Rajah of Bhurtpore ; for writing a letter marked 'Private' to General Lake, so late as November, 26, 1804, the Governor-General observed :—

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"you will also, I trust, proceed against the Rajah of Bhurtpore, *if his treachery should be proved.*"

From the words put in italics it is evident that the Governor-General did not think that the Rajah of Bhurtpore had hostile designs against the English.*

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* In reply to General Lake's letter of the 13th August, 1804, the Marquess Wellesley wrote on the 22nd August, 1804 :—

"The documents transmitted with your Excellency's despatch afford ample proof of the existence of a traitorous design to engage the power of Jeswunt Rao Holkar in the prosecution of purposes inimical to the British interests in Hindustan.

"I am however disposed to believe that Rajah Runjeet Sing, Rajah of Bhurtpore, and his son Koer Rundhere Sing, although deeply implicated in the existing design by their intercepted letters and communications, are rather to be considered as the instruments of their respective servants and adherents, than as principal contrivers of this nefarious project.

"The project has probably originated among the desperate characters, * * * and it appears reasonable to presume, that the intrigues and machinations of those abandoned adventurers have involved the Rajah of Bhurtpore and his son in a design evidently contrary to their interests, and of which the success could not prove advantageous to any other class of persons than the mean, profligate, and indigent contrivers of the original plot."

The Governor-General seems to have taken the just view of the whole affair. But those 'abandoned adventurers' were mostly men who owed allegiance to the English. In

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Besides the Rajah of Bhurtpore was under obligations to them. On the 13th August, 1804, General Lake wrote to the Marquess Wellesley :—

"It may be proper to remark, that this treacherous correspondence appears to have commenced soon after Raja Runjeet Sing had entered into a treaty with the British Government, by which he was permanently released from the tribute formerly paid by him to the Mahrattas, and was carried on at a time when he was receiving the most undoubted proof of the friendship and favor of the British Government, by my having granted to him Sunuds, subject to your Excellency's confirmation, for countries of the annual revenue of about four lacs of rupees, which were contiguous to his former possessions, and not included as the line proposed by your Lordship as the boundary of the British possessions."

General Lake presumed treachery on the part of the Rajah of Bhurtpore, but in the intercepted correspondence there is nothing to implicate that prince. He forwarded the intercepted correspondence to the Governor-General. That the Marquess Wellesley also did not consider the Raja treacherous will be evident from the extracts of his letter to General Lake, we have already given above. But the fact of the Raja having given shelter to the fugitive Holkar and his

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fact, it was the inhabitants of the territories then lately acquired by the British who had become quite disgusted with their new masters and therefore were 'plotting' with the Raja of Bhurtpore and his son.

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shattered forces beneath the walls of Deeg has been urged as a pretext to consider him as hostilely inclined to the English. In our opinion, the fact of the Jat prince Ranjit Singh not denying an asylum to Holkar while in *extremis* shows his magnanimity and brings out in bold relief the strong character of the Hindus noted for their high ideal of hospitality. When Holkar, defeated and pursued by the English, turned his steps towards Bhurtpore, Raja Runjeet Sing had every thing to lose and nothing to gain by giving an asylum to Jeswunt Rao. Of course, the law of hospitality, *as understood amongst the Asiatics in general, and Hindus in particular,* is a thing quite unknown amongst the Christians and natives of the Western countries. Hence, it is difficult for them to understand the motive of the Raja of Bhurtpore to afford refuge to Holkar who had been defeated and was being pursued by the English.

The hostile intentions of the Raja of Bhurtpore against the English not being proved, it is necessary to explain the attitude of persecution which the latter adopted towards him. The time at which the British tried to open their campaign of persecution of the Raja of Bhurtpore should be very particularly noted. It was the time when Holkar had inflicted humiliation and disaster on them. So it appears to us that the real cause of the intended campaign against the Raja of Bhurtpore consisted in the defeat which the

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English had suffered from Holkar. It was considered politically expedient to show that they could beat some one, and so they determined to beat the Raja of Bhurtpore, for that prince was not expected to make any firm stand against the English, as on the 13th August, 1804, General Lake wrote to the Governor-General that

"the power or resources of Raja Runjeet Sing, cannot reasonably give any cause of alarm for the result should it be deemed expedient to punish his treacherous conduct."

Who were those who smelt hostile designs on the part of the Raja of Bhurtpore against the English? It was General Lake, the Commander-in-Chief, and his worthy protége, Brigadier-General Monson; regarding them, the fact should be borne in mind that they had been smarting under the humiliation consequent on their late disasters. Dating his letter from Cawnpore, 13th August, 1804, Lieut.-General Lake wrote to the Marquess Wellesley:—

"Having for some time past had reason to believe that a correspondence very inimical to the British interests existed between Raja Runjeet Singh, the Raja of Bhurtpore, and Jeswunt Rao Holkar, I directed your Excellency's agent to inform Mr. Thomas Mercer, who is in charge of the police of the city of Muttrah, of my suspicions; and to desire that he would use the means which his vicinity to Bhurtpore and the Superintendents of the police of Muttrah might afford him to discover the channel of this correspondence.

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"Mr. Mercer, accordingly, having been informed by the people whom he had employed secretly for the purpose, that the accredited vakeel from Jeswunt Rao Holkar to Raja Runjeet Sing was then in the city, caused him to be apprehended, and his papers to be taken charge of and sealed until he should receive my further orders.

"The deposition of this person, by name Nerunjun Lall, taken before Mr. Mercer on the 1st instant, states that he has been long employed as the channel of communication between Jeswunt Rao Holkar and the Raja of Bhurtpore, and several zemindars in the Doab, and that the object of the correspondence carried on was the entire subversion of the British power and influence in Hindostan.

"I yesterday received from Lieutenant-Colonel Monson at Rampoorah, with a letter dated the 1st instant, several original letters which he had on that day intercepted, addressed by Koer Rundhere Sing, the eldest son of Raja Runjeet Sing, by others of his confidential servants, and by the above mentioned Nerunjun Lall to Jeswunt Rao Holkar, and to his confidential servants."

It is impossible to rely on the statements of Nerunjan Lall implicating the Raja of Bhurtpore, for it must not be forgotten that the Commander-in-Chief began his letter to the Marquess Wellesley, from which an extract has been given above, by writing,

"Having for some time past had reason to believe that a correspondence very inimical to the British interests existed between Raja Runjeet Sing, the Raja of Bhurtpore and Jeswunt Rao Holkar,"

from which it appears probable that General Lake

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must have either coaxed or bullied Nerunjan Lall or put words in his mouth to implicate the Raja of Bhurtpore. The question also naturally arises how was General Lake inspired to believe the existence of a correspondence between the Raja of Bhurtpore and Jeswunt Rao Holkar? Taking all these facts into consideration, we are inclined to the belief that General Lake's desire to implicate the Raja of Bhurtpore was based on considerations of political expediency as a set off against the disasters that had then recently overtaken the English.

Assuming that the so-called intercepted correspondence which General Lake forwarded to the Governor-General were genuine and not forgeries, there is nothing in the correspondence to show that the Raja of Bhurtpore entertained hostile designs against them. The correspondence discloses the discontent and disaffection of those who had then recently come under the rule of the English. They at first owed allegiance to Scindhia, but now they discovered that the new government under which they were placed, was altogether unsuited to them and hence they were anxious to throw off the yoke.

The correspondence also reveals the intrigues of Holkar with the inhabitants of Hindostan owing allegiance to the British and also with the ministers and subjects of the Raja of Bhurtpore. In this there was nothing extraordinary. No surprise need be felt

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at this. The British should have considered the tactics of Holkar as a compliment to them, since imitation is the best form of flattery ; and Holkar was imitating them in this respect. He was trying to take advantage of the discontent and disaffection of those who had come under their rule.

General Lake, as has been so often said before, was a 'truculent ruffian.' It did not take long for the inhabitants of the Doab or the valley lying between the Ganges and the Jumna, who had lately been the subjects of Scindhia, to find out Lake's character. The Commander-in-Chief in lording it over the inhabitants of Hindustan, adopted methods not very dissimilar to those which had provoked rebellion in Ireland. The Marquess Wellesley had given a free hand to General Lake in settling the newly acquired territories in Hindostan. The English at this time stood in need of money ; so the Commander-in-Chief did not scruple to practise extortion on the inhabitants of the Doab ; land revenues were enhanced to an extent which staggered and surprised even the oldest inhabitants who remembered the anarchy which at one time prevailed in the country under the rule of the latter-day degenerate Mogul Emperors at the time of the decline and downfall of the Empire. Even the barbarian invaders swooping over India left more subsistence for the natives of the country than the newly established machinery of

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land assessment introduced by the English. So one year's rule of the British was enough to disgust the inhabitants of Hindustan and they naturally looked to Holkar to deliver them from the bonds of the British.

It was not only the land revenue assessment which created discontent and disaffection, but, as said before, the killing of cows in the holy city of Muttra was a thing quite abominable and revolting to the feelings of the Hindu population of Hindustan.*

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* At Muttra, sanctified with the traditions of Krishna's attending to the cows and calves, the killing of cows was particularly objectionable to the Hindus. Regarding cow-killing, the author of 'Krishna and Krishnaism,' writes :—

"Krishna's love for the brute creation in general, cows and calves in particular, is of some importance at the present day, when the cow-question is convulsing the whole of Hindu-India. It is not for us to vindicate the excesses which Hindus are charged with having committed in the name of their religion, nor should we be justified in defending lawlessness or anarchy on the plea of religion or religious edicts. And if we advert to the subject at all, it is with the object of showing that veneration for the cow is not the effect of this Swami's teaching or that Sannyasi's lectures. As an important trait in Hindu character, it is as old as the Puranas. It is not the Gorakshini Sabha which has instilled such veneration into the inner nature of the Hindus, but Krishna, whose Ideal is ever present before them in sleep or waking, and they strive to follow the example and precepts of their Lord."

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Muttra, it should be remembered was the scene of Krishna's boyhood and youth. A little tact on the part of the English should have dictated them to pursue the policy of Akbar the Great and prohibit the killing of cows at such a place as Muttra.

From the intercepted correspondence, if genuine, it appears then, that the inhabitants of the Doab were intriguing with Holkar and the Raja of Bhurtpore to liberate themselves from the foreign yoke. It was convenient for the commander-in-chief to ignore the existence of discontent and disaffection then prevalent in Hindustan. He wanted to wipe out the principality of Bhurtpore so that the disaffected persons living in territories ruled by his compatriots might not find a rallying point round the Hindu Raja of that state.

While the people owing allegiance to the English were thus disaffected with them, the allies of the latter in India also tried to sever their connection with them. It has been said before, that for the prosecution of hostilities against Holkar, the English had greatly depended on Scindhia for assistance and help. It is questionable if the English would have undertaken the war against Holkar, had they not expected assistance from Scindhia. That prince, though defeated and vanquished by them by fraud and other discreditable means, still possessed a large army. Scindhia had been promised that after

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the conquest of Holkar, a large portion of the territory of the latter would be given to him. It has been already said that he sent a contingent under Bapoojee Scindhia to co-operate with the English in their war against Holkar. But after some time Scindhia seems to have been convinced that any assistance which he might render to them in their unjustifiable and wanton war upon Holkar would not redound to his credit.

But he had, moreover, many grievances against the British. In his letters to the Governor-General, Dowlut Rao Scindhia very succinctly enumerated the large number of his grievances. The systematic manner in which the Resident at his Court was insulting Dowlut Rao was, to say the least, scandalous and disgraceful.

Maharaja Dowlut Rao Scindhia's letter to the Marquess Wellesley dated 18th October, 1804, is of such historical importance, that no apology is needed for making the following extracts from it. After the war, the English should have shown a generous spirit towards their vanquished foes, but such was not their practice in India. Maharaja Dowlut Rao Scindhia was called upon to assist them in their unholy war on Holkar. At that time he was experiencing the most severe pecuniary embarassment and he asked for some assistance from the British, but

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this was refused to him. In his letter to the Governor-General, Dowlut Rao Scindhia wrote :—

"In these times of trouble and confusion my Government has sustained heavy losses, and had experienced the most severe pecuniary embarrassment, and that to enable me to collect an army, money was indispensably necessary; that without money it was impossible to assemble an army, or to prosecute war; that, as under the perfect union and identity of interests now subsisting between the two states, the loss and injury sustained by one must be considered to be the loss and injury of both; if in consideration of the embarassed state of my finances, the honourable Company's Government would, in the present crisis of affairs, grant me pecuniary assistance to the extent which might be requisite to prosecute the war, such assistance would be conformable to the dictates of that union and would therefore not be misapplied; that if, however, there should be any hesitation about affording me such pecuniary aid, I requested that it might be given to me on loan, without interest, and the amount be afterwards deducted from the annual sum of twenty lac and fifty thousand rupees (which includes the revenues of Pergunnahs Dholpore, Baree, and others), that I am to receive from the honourable Company."

It appears that Scindhia had asked Mr. Webbe, the Resident at his Court, to represent to the Governor General the severely embarassed state of his finance and to grant him pecuniary assistance. It seems that the resident treated Scindhia's request with contempt. So Maharaja Dowlut Rao Scindhia wrote :—

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"Mr. Webbe however treated this representation with the utmost contempt, and never consented to afford the least degree of pecuniary assistance, but suffered the question to float in indecision, * * * *

"My friend! I once believed that Mr. Webbe faithfully represented to your Excellency an account of all transactions at this Court, but now that I perceive Mr. Webbe is capable of such inattention and neglect with regard to the adoption of these desirable and necessary measures, I am satisfied that he has never made any communication to your Excellency of my reiterated proposals, counsels or advice to him in the present important crisis of affairs."

When Maharaja Dowlut Rao Scindhia penned the above, it should be remembered that Mr. Webbe was still alive. But when the Governor-General received the letter, Mr. Webbe was dead and gone. Under the circumstance, the Marquess out of respect to the memory of the dead resident, who had so faithfully carried out his policy based on Machiavelian suggestions, was bound to shield the character of Mr. Webbe. But it was clear that the Governor-General could no longer count upon the support of Dowlut Rao Scindhia in the unjust and wanton war he was then waging upon Holkar.

This letter of the Maharaja Dowlut Rao Scindhia contained many grievances and allegations against the English some of which even the Marquess Wellesley was compelled to admit were just and not fictitious. It will be remembered that as a postscript

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to the despatch to the Secret Committee of the Court of Directors dated 15th June, 1804, the Governor-General in Council wrote that Dowlut Rao Scindhia had "formally renounced all claim to the district of Gohud and to the fortress of Gwalior." But from Scindhia's letter it seems that he never did so ; for he wrote to the Governor-General :—

"After the conclusion of the two treaties his Excellency General Lake gave the countries of Gohud and Gwalior, together with the fort of the latter, to the people of Bhootpongra. The case however is that the countries of Gohud and Gwalior, together with the fort of Gwalior, have for a long period of time been annexed to my territory. At the time of the conclusion of the peace, I delivered to the honorable Major-General Wellesley a statement, under my own seal and signature, of all the countries and forts in Hindostan which I had ceded, together with a memorandum of their names and annual value. In that statement, however, the names of the countries of Gohud and Gwalior, with the fort of the latter, were not inserted. Had I ceded those countries their names also would unquestionably have appeared in that statement. The delivery of that territory and fort to the people of Bhootpongra and their occupation of them, therefore, was in direct violation of the treaty of peace."

Thus it was not true, as intimated by the Governor-General to the Secret Committee of the Court of Directors, that Scindhia had 'formally renounced all claim to the district of Gohud and to the fortress of Gwalior.' The manner in which the Marquess

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Wellesley tried to explain the cession of the fortress of Gwalior to the Rana of Gohud was such as Scindhia could not understand or comprehend. It will be remembered that both Mayor-General Wellesley and Major Malcolm were against the cession of the fortress of Gwalior to the Rana of Gohud ; and that General Wellesley declared his opinion that the so-called International Law on which the Governor-General had founded his claim regarding the disposal of Gwalior was little understood in India. So this forcible deprivation of Gwalior by the English was still rankling in the breast of Maharaja Dowlut Rao Scindhia.

But his letter to the Governor-General contained many other grievances and allegations against the English. Here two grievances which were well-founded and which even the Governor-General was bound to admit were just, will be mentioned. Scindhia wrote :—

"It is conditioned in the treaty, that many troops must not be stationed in the Pergunnahs of Chumarcoondah, Jaumgaum, &c. There must be only Tehseeldars, or if any zamindar shall become refractory, or if any person shall excite disturbance within those Pergunnahs, the British troops (on the application of the Tehseeldars) will apply a remedy accordingly. In conformity to the obligations of treaty, Tehseeldars only have been stationed in those Pergunnahs the whole of which have been destroyed by the violence of turbulent people, and by the Bheels, and

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continue subject to the same depredations. Although the Tehseeldars state the circumstances to the officers commanding British troops, and also to Killedar of Ahmednagar, which place is in the vicinity of those Pergunahs, no one attends to them, nor is any attempt made to suppress these disorders; and in consequence, the whole of these Pergunnahs are one continued scene of devastation and not a trace of habitation or cultivation remains. If I propose to Mr. Webbe that I should despatch troops from hence to those Pergunnahs, he will not consent nor will he himself apply a remedy."

This was a just grievance of Scindhia. It appears to us that the Resident did not attend to it because it was the policy of the English to weaken Scindhia, by creating confusion, disorder and anarchy in his dominion. They would not allow Scindhia to afford protection to the lives and properties of his subjects, nor would they themselves 'apply a remedy' to the disgraceful state of affairs that was prevalent in Scindhia's dominion.

Scindhia expressed his other grievance as follows:—

"In the second treaty it is provided that in consideration of the union established between the two states, the officers of the Company's troops will attend to the protection of my territories in the same manner as to the protection of the Company's. But notwithstanding Colonel Murray's coming to Ujjain, Jeswunt Rao Holkar invested the fort of Mundesoor during full two months, and plundered, and laid waste the whole of that district, including

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that town; and in the same manner, while Colonel Murray was at Ujjain, Meer Khan, the Afghan, a partisan of Jeswunt Rao Holkar's, invested the fortress of Bhilsa and plundered the whole of that district and the town and fort which he captured; and yet no assistance or protection was afforded by the Colonel. What is to be thought of all these points which are contrary to the treaties? This however is certain, that the circumstances of this quarter are entirely unknown to your Excellency, else such a degree of procrastination on the part of the Company in fulfilling the obligations of friendship, and the conditions of treaty were impossible."

It was a very just and legitimate grievance of Scindhia. But as usual, the Governor-General's reply was very tame and not to the point.

Scindhia's contingent had joined the English; but their subsequent defection and desertion are explained in a manner which throws a curious side-light on the military transactions of the English. If we are to believe Scindhia, and there is no reason why we should not credit him with truthfulness, he explains Colonel Monson's retreat before Holkar as due to the cowardice of that British officer. He writes:—

"I dispatched orders to Bapojee Scindhia and to Suddasheo Rao to proceed with a force, consisting of six or seven battalions of infantry and of ten thousand horse, to join his Excellency General Lake; accordingly those officers, notwithstanding the extreme distress of the troops under their command for their pay, in obedience to my

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orders, and in the hope that when they should effect a junction with the British army, his Excellency General Lake, in consequence of the union and perfect identity of interests between the two states, would not fail to relieve their exigencies, set out for Kotah without a moment of delay, * * * * * * * * . Bapojee Scindhia found that he could no longer sustain his troops without advancing them some money, and was absolutely compelled to dispatch Suddasheo Rao with a whole body of horse and infantry in different directions to seek a subsistence, * * * About this time an action took place with Jeswunt Rao Holkar, when Colonel Monson sent a verbal message to Bapojee Scindhia, desiring Scindhia to leave his baggage and Camp followers with the baggage, &c., of the British troops, and joining Mr. Lucan with his cavalry advanced to oppose Holkar. *Colonel Monson with the infantry, however, remained behind.* Bapojee Scindhia acted conformably to Colonel Monson's desire, and advancing * * encountered the enemy, * * . The loss sustained by Bapojee Scindhia in killed and wounded amounted to seven hundred horse, and much plunder was also committed. *Colonel Monson, without bearing any share in the action, effected his retreat in the utmost confusion with the infantry,* * * to *Kotah.* Bapojee Scindhia joined Colonel Monson on the road with the remainder of his broken troops."

The sentences italicised in the above extracts, prove to demonstration with what cowardice Colonel Monson effected his retreat before Holkar.

Reading the above, there does not appear to be any truth in the allegation of Ameer Khan mentioned

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in his Memoirs,* that Monson's determination to retreat had been adopted by the treacherous advice of Bapoojee Scindhia, who was in secret understanding with Jeswunt Rao. Had such been the case, had Bapoojee Scindhia been at this time, in secret understanding with Holkar, why should he have suffered such a terrible loss as that referred to by Dowlut Rao Scindhia, *viz.* :—

"The loss sustained by Bapoojee Scindhia in killed and wounded amounted to seven hundred horse, and much plunder was also committed."

But there is no doubt that subsequently Bapoojee Scindhia deserted the English and went over to and joined Holkar. This step of Bapoojee is to be explained by their cowardice and also their selfishness in their safely retreating from Holkar and leaving him to bear the brunt of fighting. Moreover, his troops were clamouring for money, as their pay had been in arrears for several months. In the course of his letter to the Governor-General, Dowlut Rao Scindhia mentioning the selfishness of Colonel Monson, wrote :—

"When Colonel Monson reached Kotah, he found himself unable to maintain his ground there, and withdrawing his troops accordingly from that place, crossed the Chumbul river in boats which he found ready for that purpose.

* Memoirs of Ameer Khan translated by Mr. Prinsep, p. 215.

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Bapoojee Scindhia at the same time requested that, after crossing the river, the Colonel would allow the boats to return for the purpose of conveying his troops across the river, that they might he enabled to join him, but Colonel Monson never returned the boats. Bapoojee Scindhia, therefore, finding it impracticable to attempt to cross the river, without the assistance of the boats, took up a position close to Kotah. Holkar's army however arriving there, invested the place, and would have shortly seized the person of Bapoojee Scindhia, had not Raja Zalim Singh of Kotah sent a message to Bapoojee Scindhia, informing Bapoojee, that if he did not visit Holkar, he would inevitably lose his life; * * * * * * * * Bapoojee Scindhia being extremely distressed and embarassed by the importunities of the troops, without the least hope of receiving any pecuniary assistance from me, was compelled ostensibly to espouse the cause of Holkar."

From the above extract then, we learn the reasons which made the contingent sent by Scindhia to assist the English desert them and join Holkar.

Not only Scindhia's contingent deserted the English, but Scindhia himself seemed to assume a threatening attitude towards them. Reading between the lines of the concluding paragraphs of the letter from which extracts have been given above, there is very little doubt that at this time, Maharaja Dowlut Rao meditated uniting his forces with those of Holkar and going to war with the English for the purpose of recovering some of the territories of which he had been lately deprived by them. The English

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also knew this; they moreover suspected a confederacy of the Raja of Berar, Scindhia, Holkar and the Raja of Bhurtpore. But they frustrated this combination of the Indian chiefs and princes.

Dowlut Rao Scindhia wrote to the Marquess Wellesley:—

"As the war with Holkar, in consequence of the officers of your Excellency's troops thinking too lightly of it, has now run to a great length, and my territory has been exposed to a last degree of devastation, and as Mr. Webbe neither fulfills the obligations of treaty or of friendship, nor returns any answers to my plans of operations for the conduct of the war, against the enemy, and to my propositions, all which are conformable to the conditions of treaty, nor adjusts any of these points, therefore a pair of hircarrahs are sent with this letter to your Excellency, for the purpose of communicating all these circumstances; and with a view to the arrangement of the disordered state of the affairs of my Government which hitherto, in consequence of the union subsisting between the two states, I have expected from the Company's officers, and which without my moving appears impracticable, nay, without that, the state of my affairs is daily becoming worse; I have, in whatever manner I was able, by loans raised funds for the provision of necessaries for my march, and for collecting my troops, and on the 20th of September marched from my encampment at Boorhanpore. I have also written to all the officers of my troops to join me from every quarter, and it is my intention to raise new troops. The friendship and union subsisting between us has induced me to write to your Excellency all circumstances past, present, and to come.

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" * * * * * As Mr. Webbe, who resides with me on the part of your Excellency, practises delay and evasion in every point, and avoids the advance of money in the form of pecuniary aid, of a loan or on account of that which is clearly and justly due by the conditions of treaty, I have deemed it necessary to communicate all circumstances to your Excellency."

The concluding paragraph of this letter shows that Scindhia at this time meditated recovering his lost possessions from the English. So he wrote:—

"My determined resolution now is, after having collected a numerous army, consisting both of old troops and new levies, to proceed to chastise the enemy; for how can I be content to see a territory, which for a long time has been in my possession, and in the conquest of which crores of rupees have been expended and great battles have been fought, in the possession of another! It is no very difficult matter to wrest the territory from the hands of the enemy. Nothing else is necessary but the open and cordial support of friends."

If language has any meaning, it meant that Scindhia did not consider it a 'very difficult matter to wrest the territory from the hands of the' English. But before this letter reached the Governor-General, Mr. Webbe was dead. Mr. Jenkins had succeeded him. As Scindhia did not fare any better at his hands, to attract attenion and to get his grievances redressed, he was obliged to incarcerate this resident. It must be admitted that this act of

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Scindhia was against every received principle of the law of nations, though there were many extenuating circumstances.

Thus then the situation of the English in India was extremely critical. They had met with defeats and disasters from Holkar. The inhabitants of the territories which they had wrested from Scindhia were plotting to bring about their ruin. They had looked up to Scindhia for help ; but that prince had been quite disenchanted of the English. The ill-treatment and studied insults and slights which he had received at their hands, especially at the hands of the residents at his Court, made him determined to sever the alliance with them.

The other non-Christian allies also could not be depended upon or trusted for help at this critical hour. The Raja of Berar was suspected of meditating war on the English. The Commander-in-Chief and his protége Colonel Monson discovered that the Raja of Bhurtpore, his ministers and subjects were encouraging and assisting Holkar to hold out and overthrow the English.

Whenever the English looked round, the prospect appeared very gloomy for them ; their state of affairs in India was extremely critical. How they managed to get out of the mesh which they had themselves woven will now be narrated.

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The Marquess Wellesley clearly discerned the fact that it was around Holkar that all his disaffected and discontented allies and dependants were rallying; and that political expediency necessitated that Holkar should be crushed at all cost. To crush that Maratha chieftain, the Governor-General, however, did not rely on force alone. He knew that the sword alone would not succeed. Something more than mere force, something other than the sword, was necessary to vanquish Holkar. That something was *fraud*. The Governor-General advocated and opened a campaign of intrigues against Holkar.

General Lake was for waging war against the Raja of Bhurtpore and wiping out his principality from the map of India. But such was not the view of the Governor-General. In his letter to General Lake, dated August 22, 1804, the Marquess Wellesley wrote:—

"I therefore hereby authorise and direct your Excellency to assure the Raja of Bhurtpore in the most distinct terms, of the determination of the British Government to discharge all the obligations of the existing treaty with him in the most strict, and punctual manner, to apprize the Raja of the falsehood and wickedness of the imputations alleged against the British Government, respecting a supposed design of violating that treaty by any interference in the Raja's internal Government, or by any attempt to subject his territories, forts, or garrisons, to the Civil or Criminal jurisdiction of the Company's Courts, or to interpose the

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authority of the Company in any manner whatever in his Civil or Military Government, or in any manner whatever to depart from the terms of the subsisting treaty."

Thus the Governor-General desired to conciliate the Raja of Bhurtpore, and, if possible, to alienate him from Holkar. But towards the latter, the Marquess Wellesley was not inclined to show any mercy. In his 'most secret and confidential' letter to the Commander-in-Chief dated 28th July, 1804, the Governor-General wrote:—

"No expectation can be entertained of any accommodation with Holkar as long as he shall remain in any degree of force. In the actual situation of affairs, a defensive war on our part would be attended with the most serious consequences to our reputation and interests."

Again,

"Although the Governor-General is desirous of concluding an amicable arrangement with Holkar, on the basis of his instructions to the Resident with Scindhia, the principal object of the Commander-in-Chief will be directed to the means of making an early and vigorous attack on the resources of Holkar, and of entirely reducing his power, if that measure should become necessary. Holkar must be made sensible of the superiority of our strength, before he will submit to the terms on which alone he can be safely admitted to the protection of the British power."

Even after penning the above, the Governor-General had the mortification and humiliation to see the English defeated by Holkar. The disasters which befell Monson were yet to come. And when

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he was acquainted with the nature of those disasters, the Governor-General advocated a campaign of intrigues against Holkar, for he knew fully that the English would not be able to overcome that Maratha Chieftain by means of force alone. So on the 17th August, 1804, the Marquess Wellesley wrote a 'private' letter to Lieut.-General Lake, transmitting 'notes upon the present state of affairs with Holkar'; and also wished to receive General Lake's 'sentiments upon these previously to the transmission of any official despatch.'

The Marquess Wellesley began his Notes marked A as follows:—

"Since the date of my last notes, it appears that Colonel Monson's detachment has retired altogether from Malwah with loss of guns, camp equipage, &c., and in great distress."

In these notes, the Governor-General sketched out the plan of campaign against Holkar. But he chiefly relied on *intrigues*, as will be evident from the following extracts:—

"Holkar's army is not paid; it depends for its subsistence entirely upon plunder, and its means must be very precarious.

"No principle of union can exist in such a body as that commanded by Holkar. The Patans and Mussalmans can have no attachment to Holkar, and most probably have no knowledge of each other, and the whole force must have

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collected about Holkar as a chief of note, and with the sole object of gaining a subsistence."

Reading the above there can be no doubt that the Marquess Wellesley implied that the Patans and Mussalmans in the employ of Holkar should be bought over by means of specious, smooth and false promises and intrigues.

After writing the above notes of instructions to General Lake, the Governor-General was informed of the final retreat of Colonel Monson to Agra. So the Governor-General wrote to Lieut.-General Lake a letter on 11th September, 1804 in which he advised him :—

"You will also take every step for confirming our allies, and for encouraging desertion from Holkar by renewing the proclamations of last year; or by other encouragements."

This advice of the Governor-General to the Commander-in-Chief was something like putting the cart before the horse; since General Lake had been already encouraging desertion from Holkar. In reply to the Marquess Wellesley's letter, the Commander-in-Chief wrote on the 22nd September, 1804 :—

"His (Holkar's) troops are in a strange state, some of them are again making proposals to come over, they shall be received if they come, but I have little faith in anything they say; *however, anything like disaffection among them*

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has its weight and may be of use, therefore it shall be encouraged."

The words put in italics in the above bring out in bold relief the intriguing nature of the Commander-in-Chief.

If Holkar was openly hostile to the English the latter were suspicious of Scindhia, because of the wrongs they had inflicted on him and so their guilty consciences were uneasy. Latterly, Scindhia had also assumed a threatening attitude towards them. Scindhia, although subdued, was not yet thoroughly crushed. Since the English were suspicious of him, it was necessary to intrigue with his officers and men. All his foreign servants had been bribed and tempted to betray their master. That was how the English obtained their victories over Scindhia. The latter however had another traitor in his Camp. His name was Jean Baptiste. It would have been better for Scindhia had he got rid of this servant of his. But for some reasons which remain unexplained, he still kept in his pay and maintained in his service, this half-caste. The Commander-in-Chief opened intrigues with him. In his 'private' letter to the Marquess Wellesley, dated Agra 22nd September, 1804, General Lake wrote :—

"Jean Baptiste would join him (*i.e.*, Colonel Murray), but cannot move from his present situation for want of subsistence for his troops. He is desirous of coming to me

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but requires a lac and-a-half of rupees to pay his troops. He is reported to be a good and fair man, and by what I have seen of him lately from his correspondence, has every appearance of being so; but I must be more convinced that he is so before I give him money, at any rate not to that extent; if he does anything worth notice it will be time enough to pay him then."

Thus it is evident that the English were carrying on intrigues with Jean Baptiste. It will be mentioned later on that Scindhia, although willing to co-operate with Holkar against the English, was unable to do so. The reason of his inability was understood by Holkar, who knew that Scindhia's inability was caused by the treachery of Jean Baptiste; and that such was the fact we have the documentary evidence of General Lake himself to prove. Although on Holkar's representation, Jean Baptiste was placed under arrest by Scindhia, yet there was no direct evidence then to convict this man of treachery. But of this there is no doubt now.

In both the extension and consolidation of the power of the English in India, the Sikhs have played a very important part. In the war of the English against Scindhia, we have already mentioned how intrigues had been set on foot with the Sikhs by the former. The Sikhs were prevailed upon to remain neutral.

On the present occasion, also, the English saw the possibility of the Sikhs rendering assistance to

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Holkar. To prevent this, they opened intrigues with them. On the 10th September, 1804, the Marquess Wellesley sent an "official and secret" letter to General Lake. He began his letter as follows:—

"I have the honor to transmit enclosed, for your Excellency's notice, an extract from a letter from Mr. A. Seton, the Governor-General's Agent at Bareilly, on the subject of the overtures received from a chieftain of the tribe of Sikhs, named Dolcha Sing, for establishing a connection with the British power.

"Your Excellency will observe, from the information contained in that letter, that Dolcha Sing is desirous of being subsidized by the British Government, and that proposals to that effect may be expected from him.

"It is possible that the services of this Chieftain may eventually be employed with effect in contributing to the protection of the Doab from the incursions of the predatory horse, when the river Jumna shall become fordable. I deem it advisable, therefore, to authorize your Excellency, if you should think proper, to subsidize Dolcha Sing, during the war. * * * "

The sentences put in italics in the above extract clearly indicate the nature of the intrigues which the English had been carrying on with the Sikhs. The letter from Mr. A. Seton is not published among the Despatches of the Marquess Wellesley, so we can only conjecture the nature of Dolcha Singh's proposals from the Governor-General's letter, an extract from which has been given above.

Such was the campaign of intrigues and conspi-

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racies opened by the English to gain their purpose. If ultimately Holkar did not suceed in getting the better of the English, it was not due to any want of valor or courage on his part, it was not that he lacked in any qualities which go to make a valiant soldier or a distinguished general, but his failure was due mostly to the net of intrigues and conspiracies which had been woven around him. The servants of the Company had raised traitors in his camp and they did not scruple to act on the maxims and suggestions of Machiavelli in gaining their selfish ends.

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CHAPTER XXXVI.

HOLKAR'S MOVEMENTS.

After the retreat of Monson, Holkar thought that he would be able to sweep every thing before him, and there was nothing improbable in his doing so, since the troops under the leadership of British officers had been very ignominiously beaten by him, and seemed to have been thoroughly demoralized. Notwithstanding all the precautions which the English had taken (and which will be referred to presently), to prevent the advance of Holkar, the latter experienced no difficulty in crossing into the territories then under their rule. It was merely a matter of walk over for Holkar to have come and occupied Muttra.

The situation of the English seemed hopeless and so they set afoot intrigues and conspiracies which have been already related in the last chapter. But although they had been intriguing and conspiring against Holkar since a very long time past, still it was a wonder to them that Holkar should have been able to collect any army at all and successfully resist, nay, defeat them. Writing on the 24th March, 1805, to the Secret Committee of the Honour-

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able the Court of Directors, the Governor-General in Council said :—

"The Governor-General in Council is not yet sufficiently informed with regard to the detail of transactions and events in the southern and western provinces of Hindustan, which immediately followed the retreat of Jeswunt Rao Holkar, to be able to explain, with accuracy and precision, the means by which Jeswunt Rao Holkar was enabled so considerably to augment the number; and to revive the spirit of his troops, notwithstanding the precipitation of his flight, the real distress of his army, and the apparently desperate condition of his affairs. The investigation of the conduct and movements of the British detachments employed against the army of Jeswunt Rao Holkar may be expected to elucidate this subject and to afford the means of explaining in a satisfactory manner the causes of that change in the situation of affairs which produced the necessity of adopting a system of measures and arrangements entirely different from those by which the Governor-General in Council confidentely hoped to accomplish the effectual reduction of the power of Jeswunt Rao Holkar."

From the published records, however, it does not appear that any investigation as to 'the means by which Jeswunt Rao Holkar was enabled to considerably augment the number and to revive the spirit of his troops' was ever made. But we think that Holkar's success in augmenting the number of his troops was mainly due to the fact that the people living under the English had become so much disgusted with them that they looked upon Holkar as

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their deliverer from their bondage, and accordingly joined his standard.

Very extensive military preparations were made to defend the territories of India then under the rule of the Company against the threatened invasion of Holkar. In the despatch of the 24th March, 1805 of the Governor-General in Council to the Secret Committee, it is stated:—

"It appeared to the Governor-General to be proper that a detachment should be stationed in the neighbourhood of the passes into the British territories in Hindustan, at some position between Agra and Delhi, for the purposes of defending those passes; and that the detachment should be of sufficient strength, both to preserve tranquility in those territories, and to defeat any part of Holkar's force which might pass in the rear of the Commander-in-Chief. The Governor-General observed, that a detachment thus formed and posted, might act as a body of reserve to the army of the Commander-in-Chief and might be strengthened from the garrisons of Agra, Delhi, Muttra, and other places.

"The defence of Delhi against an attack from the enemy was stated to the Commander-in-Chief to be an object of the greatest importance."

Not only were all the territories thus securely defended, but a net, as it were, was drawn round Holkar and it was confidently expected that that Maratha chief would be very easily quarried. Writing to the Secret Committee on the 24th March, 1805, the Governor-General in Council observed:—

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"It appeared to be desirable that the subsidiary force for Dowlut Rao Scindhia should be prepared in Hindustan, and should form a part of the army of the Commander-in-Chief; and on his Excellency's advance into Malwa, should march to Ougein to remain in that position prepared to act as the events of the campaign might render advisable. According to this plan, Holkar would have been placed between five separate British armies.

"1st—The army under the personal Command of the Commander-in-Chief.

2nd—The detachment to be posted between Delhi and Agra, near the passes.

3rd—The detachment in Bundelkhand.

4th—The subsidiary force to be stationed at Ougein.

5th—The corps under the command of Colonel Murray to be posted on the frontier of Guzerat.

"It appeared to be highly improbable that Holkar should be able to evade the attack of all these detachments; and it was the Governor-General's decided opinion, that the proposed plan of operations was preferable to any system merely defensive.

"The speedy conclusion of the war appeared to be of the highest importance in every view of the question, and a vigorous and early attack on the enemy's main force offered the fairest prospect of such a result."

Notwithstanding all these precautions, Holkar succeeded in invading the territorial possessions of the Company. In their expectation of the speedy conclusion of the war, the English were sorely disappointed. In a previous chapter, we expressed our opinion that Jeswunt Rao Holkar was not a states-

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man, that he played into the hands of the unscrupulous servants of the Company and was the cause of all the troubles which befell the Maratha nation. But for his attack on Poona, the Peishwa would not have fled from his capital and signed the Treaty of Bassein, which brought about the second Maratha War together with the loss of independence of the Marathas. But now Holkar seemed to have repented for his conduct. Although he did not show much statesmanship, the generalship exhibited by him was of a very high order. He outmanoeuvred and outgeneralled the English. Not only had he inflicted severe losses on Monson, but the manner in which he evaded the net that had been drawn round him by the English and invaded their possessions in Hindostan, spoke very highly of his knowledge of military tactics.

The English knew that in a fair fight they would not be able to overcome Holkar. And as according to their saying that in love and war, everything is justifiable, they began intriguing against him, and also by holding out temptations tried to raise traitors in his camp. They encouraged among Holkar's troops a spirit of desertion.

A guilty conscience does not know what tranquility and peace of mind mean, and is consequently never happy. The Company's Government of India of those days were very uneasy on account of their

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guilty conscience. They smelt danger where it is questionable if any had existed. It was supposed that the successes which Holkar had, encouraged the Maratha princes to combine again and recover some of their possessions of which they had been very unrighteously deprived in the previous year. Of all the independent Maratha princes, the Raja of Berar was the weakest. The sin of the father is visited on the son. The immediate predecessor of the Berar Raja had greatly helped the English in getting a footing in India, and it has already been narrated how they repaid his successor. Now that they had met with nothing but disasters and defeats from Holkar, it was political expediency to show to the world that they could beat some persons. These persons were chosen to be the Raja of Bhurtpore and the Raja of Berar, because both these princes were considered to be very weak and their resources very insignificant compared to those of the Company.

It was one of the Christian kings named Olaf who chanted centuries ago:—

> "Force rules the world. Has ruled it, will rule it.
> Meekness is weakness. Force is triumphant."

By the manner in which the Raja of Bhurtpore had submitted to the dictates of the English without even the show of resistance, it was certain that he was

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not a powerful prince. Accordingly they thought that they would be able to crush him very easily.

The Second Maratha War brought out in bold relief the weak points in the military oganization of the Raja of Berar. When the English discovered the weakness of that prince they deprived him of all his fertile provinces and reduced his power and resources to an extent which made him quite helpless and incapable of ever raising even his little finger against them. The latter knowing the weakness and helplessness of the Berar Raja thought it a good policy to altogether wipe out his independent state from the map of India. He was accused of harbouring designs against them, which it is very questionable that he ever did. But whether he did so or not, the English were bent upon humiliating him at all costs. In reviewing the whole transactions after the lapse of a century, it is impossible for any impartial and unprejudiced historian not to condemn, in the strongest language possible, the manner in which the English treated the Raja of Berar. In the despatch of the Secret Committee dated 24th March, 1805, the Governor General in Council wrote:—

"The Governor-General deemed it expedient to issue instructions to the Resident at Nagpore, directing him to take a proper opportunity of apprizing the Raja of Berar in *the most public manner* of the information which the British Government had received with regard to his

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proceeding *that the Governor-General had deemed it necessary, without awaiting any explanation, to make preparatory arrangements for the eventual purpose of repelling aggression and punishing treachery on the part of the Raja*; that accordingly Major-General Wellesley had returned to the army of the Deccan, with orders to march directly to Nagpore in the event of any unquestionable indication which the Raja might manifest of a design to commit acts of hostility against the British Government or its allies, or of any proceedings of the Raja in favour of our enemies. That the Governor-General was also prepared to take further measures for the just punishment of the Raja of Berar in such an event ; * * * *, the Governor-General resolved to call forth the whole power and resources of the Company against a state so devoid of every principle of good faith, and not to desist until the Government of the Raja should have been effectually reduced."

From the words put in italics in the above, it is evident that the Governor-General was bent on encompassing the ruin of the Raja of Berar and even lacked the decency, not to say the courtesy, of enquiring into the correctness of the charge of hostile designs on the part of the Raja. The Marquess Wellesley considered it a matter of political expediency to totally crush the Raja, but he was an expert dissembler of more than common Western dissimulation. His instructions to the Resident at Nagpur conclusively prove his perfidious nature and intriguing spirit. In writing to the Secret Committee on the 24th March, 1805, he said :

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"The Resident, however, was directed to suspend these representations until he should have learned the result of the Commander-in-Chief's first operations against Holkar, unless circumstances should render an immediate statement of them useful and necessary.

"*The Resident was at the same time instructed to assure the Raja of the most amicable disposition of the British Government towards him while he should continue to abide by his engagements under the late peace; &c., &c.*"

The above sentences, and especially those put in italics, show the hypocritical manner in which the Governor-General tried to deal with the Raja. While he professed 'the most amicable disposition' towards the Raja, he was, at the same time devising means and schemes to cut his throat. He was only biding his time to do so.

That the English had wronged the Raja, they believed in their heart of hearts. So with their guilty consciences, they presumed that the Raja had been plotting against them. The Governor-General in Council, in the despatch under reference, mentioned the nature of the Raja's grievances against the English:—

"It manifestly appeared not merely by the Raja's rejection of those beneficial articles, but by the general tenor of his declarations and those of his ministers, that the Raja still considered the alienation of the provinces in question to be an act of injustice and a violation of faith on the part of the British Government."

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The Raja of Berar was weak and therefore the servants of the Company did not scruple to freely bleed him. The Resident at the Court of the Berar Raja was a native of Scotland named Mountstuart Elphinstone. We shall have occasion to say a great deal regarding him in another place. It is only proper here to say that, breathing the atmosphere of the corrupt political school of the Wellesleys, he could not have been expected to show much consideration for the independent princes of India ; for it was the creed of the politicians and statesmen of those days to use fraud and force to overawe and deprive Indian princes of their independence and worldly possessions. Mountstuart Elphinstone rose to eminence by becoming a votary of that creed. The manner in which he bullied and badgered the Raja of Berar can hardly be regarded as a matter of credit either to him or to the Christian government which employed him.

It will take long to narrate the manner in which the resident persecuted and annoyed the Raja of Berar. The Governor General in Council in the despatch to the Secret Committee referred to above took pride in mentioning the doings of the Resident. The Raja of Berar was weak and so he had to put up with the humiliation to which he was subjected. But it was fortunate for him that Holkar was not yet vanquished. Had it been so, there is no doubt

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that his principality would have been then wiped out of the map of India.

Although greater danger was to be apprehended from Scindhia, yet the policy pursued towards him was of a totally different nature from that adopted towards the Raja of Berar. This was solely to be attributed to the fact that Scindhia was more formidable than, and not so weak as, the Raja of Berar.

Upon the cowardly retreat of General Monson to Agra, Jeswunt Rao Holkar, as said before, advanced triumphantly with his army and took possession of Muttra. That he succeeded in doing so, notwithstanding the large garrison which the British had thrown in there, shows that the troops under the command of the British officers had been thrown into confusion and alarm at his approach. Muttra was abandoned at his approach.

It does not appear that Jeswunt Rao Holkar had any designs at this time upon the territories of the Company in Hindostan. The sacred city of the Hindoos had been polluted by the Christians allowing that very useful animal, the cow, to be butchered within its walls. Having delivered the sacred city from the hands of the English, he thought that his task had been done. The reconquest of, and expulsion of the British from Hindostan, was at this time far from his mind. Had he been so inclined, he

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could have as easily occupied Delhi as he had done Muttra.

It seems to us that Holkar stayed at Muttra to mature plans for the recovery of his dominions, for it was known to him that Colonel Murray from the side of Guzerat and Colonel Wallace from Deccan had been advancing on his possessions in Malwa and the Deccan respectively.

Colonel Murray, although at one time, that is on the 1st of July, he commenced his retreat towards the Myhee, and thus did not join Monson, was, as soon as Holkar had proceeded towards Hindostan, busily engaged in intriguing, and also advancing on to Holkar's dominions. From the Despatch of the Governor-General in Council to the Secret Committee dated 24th March, 1805, it would seem that Colonel Murray had been engaged in encouraging desertion among the adherents of Jeswunt Rao Holkar. In the despatch above referred to, it is mentioned that

"Colonel Murray having submitted to the Governor-General several questions relative to the extent to which he might be permitted to encourage desertion among the adherents of Jeswunt Rao Holkar, and to offer to them employment in the service of the allies, * * * the Governor-General in Council deemed it to be advisable to furnish Colonel Murray with instructions * * *.

"The Governor-General in Council stated his opinion to be, that the advantages to be derived by the employment of a large number of deserters from the cause of Holkar would

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not be adequate to the expense and inconvenience attending that measure."

Although the Governor-General in Council did not authorize Colonel Murray to encourage desertion among the adherents of Jeswunt Rao Holkar, it is more than probable that that officer must have done so by means of smooth, specious and false promises to gain his ends. For on no other hypothesis, his success in capturing all the possessions of Holkar in Malwa without fighting any battles, can be reasonably explained. That English officers could *successcully* encourage treachery and desertion shows the foolishness, degeneracy and absence of patriotism of considerable numbers of Indians.

On the 5th July, 1804, Colonel Murray resumed his march towards Ujjain, at which city he arrived on the 8th of the same month without having encountered any opposition. The Governor-General in Council wrote to the Secret Committee, on the 24th March, 1805, that,

"During the continuance of Colonel Murray's detachment at Ujjain, that officer took possession, *without any resistance*, of the whole of the territory in the occupation of Jeswunt Rao Holkar, situated in that quarter, and of Indore, the capital of the possessions of the family."

From the words which have been put in italics above, it seems to us evident that Colonel Murray must have encouraged desertion among the adherents

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of Jeswunt Rao Holkar and thus succeeded in occupying that Chief's possessions without encountering any resistance.

Colonel Wallace, who had been left in command of the British forces in the Deccan on the departure of General Wellesley for Calcutta, marched from Poona on the 22nd of August. He crossed the Godavery with his infantry at Paithan, about the 18th of September and on the 27th was joined at Forkabad by Lieut.-Colonel Haliburton, whose march as well as that of Colonel Wallace, had been impeded by the severity of the weather ; and on the 30th Colonel Wallace was joined by his cavalry, which had proceeded higher up the Godavery than Paithan in search of a ford.

Early in the month of October, the Peishwa's contingent joined Colonel Wallace. During the course of that month, Chandore was captured as well as several other forts belonging to Holkar in the Deccan. The possession of these forts by the English deprived Holkar of all his possessions to the southward of the Taptee.

Although Holkar was pursuing a career of conquest in Northern India he felt the loss of all his possessions in Malwa and the Deccan. His long stay in Muttra must have been occasioned by his devising plans and making preparations for the recovery of his lost possessions. At the time when he meditated

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hostilities with the English, he had sent an agent to the Resident at Poona who wished to be informed whether the British Government would receive proposals of accommodation from Holkar. The Resident at Poona, at this time, was Colonel Close, to whom the agent delivered a letter from Holkar, addressed to the Governor-General, but evidently intended for Major-General Wellesley, in which Holkar asserted that he was compelled by the aggressions of General Lake to have recourse to arms, and attempted to vindicate his conduct in his intercourse with the British Government.

It was this vindictive spirit of the servants of the Company which led Holkar to solicit the co-operation of Scindhia, the Raja of Berar and the Raja of Bhurtpore. With their characteristic short memory, forgetting the obligations they owed to Holkar and lacking in gratitude, the servants of the Company were plotting for his destruction. The stay of Holkar at Muttra seems to have been due to his devising means to counteract their plot. But he was unfortunate in all his undertakings. The English took advantage of his stay at Muttra by spreading reports of his destitute condition, which reports were calculated to encourage desertion among his adherents and thus reduce his power of resistance.

While Holkar was resting his wearied limbs in Muttra, General Lake was actively engaged in

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making preparations to attack and annihilate him. He marched from Cawnpore on the 3rd, arrived at Agra on the 22nd of September, and assembling his army at Secundra, marched on the 1st of October towards Muttra. As the Commander-in-Chief's army approached Muttra, Holkar retired towards Delhi with the intention, no doubt, of capturing it and with it the person of the Moghul Emperor. But ever since the capture of that Imperial city by General Lake, it had been very strongly garrisoned by troops under the command of British officers as a safeguard against surprises. Extra vigilance was exercised when the presence of Holkar in the Doab, and especially his stay in Muttra was known. The officer who was at this time holding the command of Delhi was Lieut. Colonel Ochterlony. As was customary with the English residents in India of those days, this officer maintained a seraglio consisting of women of very questionable morals. The Europeans in those days most promiscuously led immoral lives. But having native women of low or no morals gave them the advantage of learning the language, and becoming acquainted with the views and opinions of the people of the country. It was thus political considerations which prompted the Europeans in keeping harems. These harems were the centres of intrigues. It was absolutely necessary for the English who were then trying to establish

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their power in India to be well supplied with spies—and female spies, if clever, were of much more service than those of the male sex. They have more tact. They have better opportunities of worming men's and women's secrets out of them. The influence which Ochterlony wielded in Delhi was greatly to be attributed to the women he had in his keep, who, possessing an access to the Zenana of the Moghul Emperor, and of other notabilities, kept him informed of all the gossip and news of that Imperial city as well as of Court intrigues.

Although the Emperor had been released from the guardianship of the Marathas, the Company had not as yet made any arrangement respecting the maintenance of him and his family. The mind of the Emperor was fed with hopes and at that time, when Holkar marched towards Delhi, there can be no doubt that the Emperor threw all the influence he possessed on the side of the English. It was no wonder then that Holkar did not succeed in capturing Delhi.

When Holkar did not succeed in capturing Delhi, and when he knew that General Lake was on full march in his rear from Muttra, he retreated towards Saharunpore. He had hoped assistance from and co-operation of the chieftains who ruled in that part of the country. But he was bitterly disappointed in all these hopes. It will be remembered that the

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Governor-General had authorised General Lake to intrigue with that Sikh chieftain Dolcha Singh, as well as with Bamboo Khan, the Begum Sumroo and other petty chieftains residing in and about Saharunpore. Such being the case, it was not possible for Holkar to succeed against the British.

It is not necessary to mention in detail the battles which took place between the armies of Holkar and of the British after Holkar retreated from Delhi. The Commander-in-Chief arrived at Delhi on the 17th of October, two days after Holkar's retreat. Holkar, not finding any support from the chieftains of the country of Saharunpore, retreated towards the territory of the Raja of Bhurtpore, from whom as a Hindoo, he as a refugee and in distress expected treatment according to the laws of hospitality. The Commanderin-Chief with the troops under his command did not cease pursuing him and fought several battles, preliminary to that of Deeg and the siege of Bhurtpore, which will be narrated in the next chapter.

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CHAPTER XXXVII.

THE SIEGE OF BHURTPORE.

After leaving Delhi, Holkar did not meet with that assitance from the chieftains inhabiting the Saharunpore District which he had expected. As said before, the English had opened intrigues with these chieftains and so they did not help Holkar in any way.

Lieut. Colonel Burn was detached to pursue Holkar on his retreat from Delhi. This officer had been commanding Saharunpore, but had been recalled to the defence of Delhi. He left Delhi and crossed the Jumna on the 26th of October. Although he was in close proximity of Holkar's troops, there was no fighting. In the meanwhile, Holkar discovering the fact that he could not obtain any help from the chieftains of Saharunpore, commenced his march towards the territory of the Raja of Bhurtpore, where he expected to find an asylum. It was not Colonel Burn alone who was in pursuit of Holkar, but the Commander-in-Chief in person set out to pursue him. On the 31st of October General Lake, with his three regiments of Dragoons, three regiments of native cavalry, and the mounted artillery, crossed the

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Jumna to pursue the cavalry of Holkar. At the same time Major-General Fraser, with the main body of the infantry, two regiments of native cavalry, and the park of artillery, was directed to move upon the infantry and artillery of Holkar, which had reached the neighbourhood of Deeg, in the territory of the Raja of Bhurtpore.

"The object of this double movement was," writes Mr. Mill (vi. p. 416), "to force both the cavalry and the infantry of Holkar to risk an action with the British troops, or to make him fly from Hindustan, under circumstances of so much ignominy and distress, as would have a disastrous effect upon the reputation of his cause."

At this time Holkar was encamping in a place called Shamlee ; here General Lake arrived on the 3rd November, on whose approach Holkar marched in a southerly direction with the intention of retiring into the territory of the Raja of Bhurtpore.

Major-General Fraser marched from Delhi on the 5th of November in pursuit of Holkar's infantry and arrived in the neighbourhood of Deeg on the 12th November. On the following day, that is, on the 13th, a battle was fought between Holkar's and the troops under the command of General Fraser. It was a very dearly bought victory for the English. Holkar's pieces of ordnance fell into the hands of General Fraser's troops. The Maratha army, now vanquished and defeated, had to take refuge in the

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fort of Deeg. General Fraser fell mortally wounded in the battle and so the command devolved on Colonel Monson. The loss of the British was severe ; no less than 643 were killed and wounded and of these 22 were British officers. It is impossible to correctly estimate Holkar's loss. According to the statement of the English writers, Holkar is said to have lost 2000 men and 87 pieces of ordnance.

General Lake, as said before, was in pursuit of Holkar's cavalry, whom he surprised and encountered at Farrukhabad on the 17th November. It is said that General Lake had, from the 31st October, marched at the rate of 23 miles daily. Although he surprised Holkar, he was not able to either capture him or annihilate his cavalry. It is said that the explosion of a tumbril, as the British troops approached the Maratha camp, gave the alarm to Holkar, and he fled with his followers to Deeg. Again we find Holkar out-manouvering and out-generalling the Commander-in-Chief, for we fail to understand, that had General Lake shown military tactics of a very high order, how he could have allowed Holkar to escape to Deeg. Even in his pursuit of Holkar, he was unable to overtake him. Of course, Holkar was surprised and his camp was thrown into confusion, but the manner in which he eluded the pursuit of, and escaped capture by the English shows that

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he understood the art of warfare better than the Commander-in-Chief.

At Deeg, it has been said above, the infantry of Holkar had been defeated by the forces under the command of Major-General Fraser. Holkar was not present there in person.

The British were now very jubilant. The objects for which the war had been undertaken by them were now accomplished. In their usual pompous style, the Governor-General as well as the Commander-in-Chief proclaimed to the world the victories they had obtained over Holkar's forces. In a 'private and confidential' letter to the Marquess Wellesley on the 19th November, 1804, General Lake wrote:—

"You will receive in the accompanying packet the detailed account of the great and glorious victory gained at Deeg by General Fraser and Lieut.-Colonel Monson, which I really do think appears to surpass anything that has hitherto been done in India, and I should hope would end the war directly. Holkar and his horse are flying as fast as they can to get over the Jumna, at least those that belong to the other side, and many—very many of his Patans who have escaped are going towards their homes: the country we are marching through is strewed with dead bodies, and by all accounts the numbers wounded that have crept into villages are beyond belief. The rapidity of my march has astonished all the natives beyond imagination, and made them think there is nothing we are not equal to."

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In reply to this letter, the Governor-General wrote on the 26th November, 1804, to General Lake:

"Most sincerely do I congratulate you on the prosperous result of the skilful and judicious disposition which you made for the pursuit of the enemy's cavalry, and the capture of his guns at the same moment. Both events are equal in importance to the most splendid victories we have obtained; no greater display has been made of our power, valor, or skill. It is now evident that we are able to frustrate the Mahratta operations even according to their ancient and most approved mode of warfare; and, as the last war had manifested, that they cannot support a system of regular war against us, this war has shown that their system of predatory and light movement must also fail in the face of our armies, and especially of our cavalry.

"I trust that the affairs of the 13th and 17th of November will finish the most arduous branch of these vexatious hostilities, and enable me at length to fix the peace of India on a secure basis."

But all these mutual congratulations of the two self-sufficient persons were premature. The affairs of the 13th and 17th November, 1804, did not end the war or enable the Governor-General to place the peace of India on a secure basis. The escape of Holkar was not considered an event of much consequence by the Commander-in-Chief. But Holkar's flight was a turning point in the History of the Rise of the Power of the Christians in India, for it was pregnant with consequences which were highly beneficial to the Indians. The Governor-General fully

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realized the danger of Holkar's escape. So he wrote to the Commander-in-Chief :—

"It is unfortunate that Holkar's person should have escaped you; you are equally impressed with me by the absolute necessity of seizing or destroying him. Until his person be either destroyed or imprisoned, we shall have no rest. I therefore rely on you to permit no circumstance to divert you from pursuing him to the utmost extremity."

Deeg, as said before, is in the territory of the Raja of Bhurtpore. It was here that Holkar with his cavalry and infantry found shelter. The Raja of Bhurtpore had concluded an alliance with the British Government of India and so his affording protection to Holkar was looked upon by them as a piece of treachery. But if we carefully and impartially analyze the conduct of the Raja, we shall be obliged to absolve him from the charge of treachery levelled against him by the English writers of Indian history. Although the Raja had been well-treated for the services he had rendered to the British during their war with Scindhia, he had reasons to be alarmed at their high-handed proceedings. Mr. Mill in his history of India (vi. p:420) writes :—

"Offence appeared to have been taken by the Raja at the violent manner in which the British resident at Muttra had decided some disputes respecting the traffic in salt; and some alarm was conveyed to his mind by a report that the English Government was to introduce the English Courts of justice into his dominions."

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In his edition of Mill's History of India, Prof. H. H. Wilson, as a footnote to the above, adds:—

"Another cause seems to have been a religious feeling. The letters of the agent repeatedly allude to the Raja's horror at the cowkilling propensities of the infidel English."

Although it is probable that the Raja did not at first entertain any hostile designs against the British government, the conduct of the latter towards him, obliged him, it seems, to throw in his lot with that of Holkar. In that he considered his safety lay.

Unfortunately the Governor-General had entrusted the negotiations with the Raja of Bhurtpore to the hands of General Lake. After the perusal of all the despatches written to the Governor-General by the latter there is little room for doubting the fact that the Commander-in-Chief was bent upon war with the Raja of Bhurtpore. Moreover, the manner in which the Raja was being bullied by the Britishers was such as no one possessing the least grain of self-respect in him would tamely submit to. He was not given an opportunity to explain his conduct, but placing implicit confidence in the genuineness of the intercepted correspondance, the English concluded that the Raja had been guilty of treachery and tried to interfere in his state concerns. On the 24th March, 1805, the Governor-General in Council wrote to the Secret Committee of the East India Company,

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regarding the proceedings which had been adopted towards the Raja of Bhurtpore:—

"The Commander-in-Chief was desired at the same time to communicate to Rajah Runjit Sing, copies of all the intercepted letters addressed to Jeswunt Rao Holkar, under the seals of the Raja and his son; to warn the Raja of the ruin in which he and his family would inevitably be involved by the continuance of the detected intercourse between the State of Bhurtpore and Jeswunt Rao Holkar, and to require the Raja and his family to relinquish all communication with Holkar, and every other enemy of the British Government under pain of being considered and treated as a public enemy.

"The Commander-in-Chief was also directed to apprize the Raja of his determination to seize and bring to justice all the agents concerned in this traitorous correspondence wherever they might be found, and to inform him that the indulgence and consideration which had been manifested towards him and his son, would not be extended to the inferior of the conspiracy; and the Commander-in-Chief was accordingly directed to proceed without delay, to seize all the agents and intruments of this conspiracy, although they should take refuge within the territories of our allies and dependants, and particularly to seize all those who might remain within the territory of Bhurtpore; informing the Raja that the British Government was resolved not to admit of any asylum for criminals of this description.

"In conformity to the spirit of this communication, the Commander-in-Chief was authorized and directed to bring to trial before a court martial, all persons concerned in the conspiracy who might be arrested within the territories of our allies, or dependents, and in such parts of our possesions as might not have been rendered subject to the laws

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and regulations of the British Government, and to inflict such punishment as might be awarded by the court martial."

Now, the instructions which the Governor-General issued to the Commander-in-Chief were not such as to allay the apprehensions of the Raja of Bhurtpore regarding the ulterior designs of the English upon his independence and upon his dominion. As said before, the Raja was not given an opportunity to explain his conduct. He was not even asked to co-operate with the English in suppressing the conspiracy. On the contrary, he was ordered to hand over those suspected of conspiracy to the latter for trial. This peremptory demand of the Governor-General touched the most susceptible part of the Raja. Of course, the Christian Europeans do not understand the laws of hospitality as observed and practised by non-Christian Asiatics. No true Oriental would hand over to justice even the vilest criminal who comes as a refugee and seeks his protection. Such being the case, it was altogether out of the question that the Raja would deliver into the hands of the English those of his subjects whom they suspected of conspiracy. Moreover, a step like this would have lowered the prestige of the Raja in the eyes of all his subjects.*

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* The English demanded the surrender of those who

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In self-defence the Raja had to do something to counteract the humiliation which the English were proposing to subject him to. No surprise need be felt, therefore, if he rendered assistance to Holkar, since that Maratha prince was being looked upon as the deliverer of India from the yoke of the foreigners.

Although the Marquess Wellesley was not much in favour of going to war with the Raja of Bhurtpore, General Lake was of a different opinion. Like a blood-thirsty hound, the Commander-in Chief delighted in the sight of bloodshed. On the 27th November, 1804, in a letter marked 'Private,' General Lake wrote to the Marquess Wellesley :—

"I last night received the notes from Mr. Edmonstone, respecting my conduct towards the Bhurtpore Raja. They, like all other directions from your Lordship, are perfectly clear, * *. *I will not involve Government in a war if possible with this ungrateful man; but I fear he had entered so far into it already, that it will not be in my power to avoid attacking and reducing him and his forts without delay.*"

In the words put in italics in the above extract General Lake clearly sounded the note of war. Again, on the 30th November, 1804, in a 'private' letter to the Marquess Wellesley, he wrote :—

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had taken refuge at Bhurtpore; and the Raja earns our respect by daring their anger, and not complying with their demand.

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"I have received all your notes and remarks upon this war, which I am in hopes will not only end well, but shortly. What this treacherous fool Runjeet Sing can mean is beyond all comprehension; * * * he certainly deserves no favour from our Government, as his conduct has been the most unprovoked and violent that ever was heard of. * * * I am fully aware of the necessity of avoiding war as much as possible at this moment as it would appear there is a general combination against our government; and yet I cannot help thinking when the two last actions are fully known, that neither Sindhia or the Raja of Berar will ever join themselves to a man of broken fortune like Holkar."

Thus then it is evident, the Commander-in-Chief wanted war. The Governor-General also, as will be shortly related, fell into his views. It was resolved upon by both of these high English functionaries in India that the Raja of Bhurtpore should be punished for his having afforded shelter to Holkar and his forces. So with a very light heart they entered into the war with the Raja of Bhurtpore.

It was decided to lay siege to the fort of Deeg in which Holkar and his army had taken refuge. A battering train from Agra was ordered. General Lake wrote to the Marquess Wellesley on the 30th November, 1804:—

"I shall move forward tomorrow towards Deig, and see what can be done before the battering train comes up. I may possibly get at Holkar once more. I believe he has no force left, at least so inconsiderable that they are little

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more than an escort for himself. They say a few men of his brigades remain. This report shall be ascertained whether true or false very shortly."

On the 1st December, 1804, General Lake commenced his march to Deig, which was reached on the 8th December. It was resolved to reduce Deig by storm. The battering train and necessary stores arrived from Agra, on the 10th ; and ground was broken on the 13th. In ten days, that is, on the 23rd, a breach was made in the wall, which was stormed and taken at mid-night with the loss on the part of the British of 227 men killed and wounded. On the ensuing day and night the town and fort of Deig were evacuated, the garrison flying in the direction of Bhurtpore.

So long the Governor-General had issued no definite instructions to the Commander-in-Chief regarding his taking any steps against the Raja of Bhurtpore. Although General Lake had fully made up his mind to go to war with the Raja, the Marquess Wellesley had not sanctioned this. The latter was watching the progress of events. In the Despatch of the 24th March, 1805, the Governor-General in Council wrote to the Secret Committee of the East India Company :—

"The expediency of attacking the Raja of Bhurtpore, or of overlooking his conduct appeared to depend in a material degree upon the operations which it might become

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necessary to adopt against Holkar. If it should become necessary for the Commander-in-Chief to pursue Holkar in such a direction, and to such a distance as would place Bhurtpore between his army and the British possessions, it would be necessary to decide—

"First, whether it would be prudent to leave the State of Bhurtpore in full possession of its power and resources in the rear of our army.

"Secondly. Whether in the event of the above question being decided in the negative, it might not be practicable to leave a force adequate to the reduction of the Raja's territories, or at least of sufficient strength to impose a restraint upon the forces of the Raja, although unequal to the operation above described while the main army should act against Holkar.

"Thirdly. Whether in the event of neither of these two modes being practicable, it would be more hazardous to suspend the pursuit of Holkar until the Raja of Bhurtpore's power should be reduced, or to leave that state in possesion of its power and resources in the rear of our army."

"The Governor-General was of opinion that these questions should be decided by the judgment of the Commander-in-Chief, and accordingly desired that his Excellency would exercise his discretion with respect to the adoption of one or other of these plans."

General Lake was thus given a free hand to choose between the maintenance of peace and declaration of war with the Raja of Bhurtpore. As has been said so often before, General Lake was in favour of war. For it seems to us that at the time when General Lake marched towards Deig, the prolonga-

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tion of the war and the subsequent siege of Bhurtpore could have been averted, had the English been inclined towards the maintenance of or rather the bringing about of peace with the Raja of Bhurtpore.

Holkar was also now in *extremis*. There is no reason to suppose that he would not have listened to overtures of peace from the English.

They thought that they had to deal with weak enemies, and nothing short of their utter annihilation, and annexation of their territories would have satisfied them.

When the Governor-General came to know of the reduction and fall of Deig, instead of making overtures of peace to the fallen foe, a step which would have shown his generous and magnanimous nature, he did not hesitate to give final instructions to General Lake to make war on the Raja. In the despatch marked "Secret and official" and dated Fort William Dec. 20, 1804, the Marquess Wellesley wrote to General Lake:—

"I entirely approve the measures which Your Excellency has already pursued for the purpose of frustrating the effects of the Raja's treachery and hostility, and for the reduction of the fortress of Deig. The entire reduction of the power and resources of the Raja of Bhurtpore however, is now become indispensably necessary, and I accordingly authorize and direct Your Excellency to adopt immediate arrangements for the attainment of that desirable object, and for the annexation to the British power, in such

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manner as Your Excellency may deem most consistent with the public interests, of all the forts, territories, and possessions belonging to the Raja of Bhurtpore."

At the time when the Commander-in-Chief received the above letter from the Marquess Wellesley, he was busily engaged in prosecuting the siege of Bhurtpore. The loss of Deig was a great blow to the Raja, but to his credit let it be said that he did not desert the refugee Holkar and was willing to share all the misfortunes with him. He did not submit to the humiliating terms proposed to him by the victors and rather risked all that he possessed than play false to the traditions of his country and religion by betraying Holkar who had sought his protection.

With the loss of Deig, the Raja had lost all his territories, except the town of Bhurtpore. The surrounding country had been taken charge of by the English. Upon the resources of Bhurtpore alone, he had to depend for his existence. The town of Bhurtpore was eight miles in extent and was surrounded by a mud wall of great thickness and height and a very wide and deep ditch filled with water. The fort was situated at the eastern extremity of the town ; and the walls had bastions, mounted with artillery. The whole force of the Raja, with many of the inhabitants of the surrounding country together with the shattered battalions of Holkar's infantry,

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was thrown into the place. Holkar's cavalry remained outside the town and eluded the pursuit of the English by their rapid marches and not a little annoyed and harried them by attacking their convoys and cutting off supplies.

General Lake moved from Deig on the 29th of December and arrived before Bhurtpore on the 3rd of January 1805. The siege was commenced in right earnest and the batteries were opened against the town on the 7th. On the 9th, a breach in the wall of the town was reported practicable; and storming the town was determined upon. But so far all their efforts met with no success. On the 10th January, General Lake wrote to the Marquess Wellesley:—

"I have the honour to inform Your Lordship, that in consequence of the breach in the wall of the town being reported practicable, I determined on storming the place yesterday evening. I chose this time, in order to prevent the enemy from stockading the breach during the night which had hitherto been the case.

"I am sorry to add, that obstacles of an insurmountable nature were opposed to the storming party, on their arrival at the breach; the water in the ditch was exceedingly deep; this difficulty however was speedily surmounted, and the party gained the foot of the breach; but though every exertion was made by both officers and men, the breach was so imperfect, that every effort to gain the top proved fruitless, and the column, after making several attempts with heavy loss, was obliged to retire, which they did in excellent order, to our battery."

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This attempt to capture Bhurtpore by force was unsuccessful ; but the Commander-in-Chief fed the mind of the Governor-General with hopes which were never to be realized. In concluding the letter from which the above extract is given, he wrote :—

"I beg to assure Your Lordship, that the conduct of our officers and men employed last night, has been as exemplary as on every former occasion; but circumstances of an unexpected and unfortunate nature, occurred, which their utmost efforts could not surmount; but I hope, in a very few days, their excellent conduct will be rewarded by the possession of the place."

But this hope, as is well-known, was not realized.

A second attempt was again made, but this, too, was as unsuccessful as the first. On the 21st January, 1805, General Lake wrote to the Marquess Wellesley :—

"I have the honor to inform Your Lordship, that the breach appearing in a sufficient state of forwardness, I determined to attempt the place again this afternoon.

"The storming party moved out of the trenches, where they had been lodged for the purpose, a little before three o'clock. I am sorry to add, that the ditch was found so broad and deep, that every attempt to pass it proved unsuccessful, and the party was obliged to return to the trenches, without effecting their object.

"The troops behaved with their usual steadiness, but I fear, from the heavy fire they were unavoidably exposed to, for a considerable time, that our loss has been severe."

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This failure for the second time greatly depressed the Commander-in-Chief The loss in men and want of military stores and provisions delayed the commencement of renewed operations, till the beginning of February, when the batteries were opened upon the wall, and on the 20th of the same month, the breach being supposed to be practicable, an attempt for the third time to carry the place by assault was made under the directions of the Commander-in-Chief. Like the first two attempts, this one, too, was unsuccessful. But this failure was largely due to the cowardice of the British soldiers. The manner in which they behaved themselves was simply scandalous and showed how demoralized they had become by their repeated failures. Had it not been for the pluck and courage of the Indian Sepoys, it is not improbable that the Commander-in-Chief would have been obliged to raise the siege and retire into the Company's territories. The cowardly and insubordinate manner in which the British soldiers behaved themselves in contrast with the plucky and courageous conduct of the Indian troops has been thus described by a British writer:—

"These two failures having enforced the necessity of more regular proceedings, approaches were begun in a different position, and carried to the edge of the ditch, supplies of stores and artillery were brought from Agra and other depots; and more powerful batteries, though still

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much too weak for the propose, opened against part of the wall where the curtain was of less width than usual, and was effectually covered by a bastion at either extremity. On the morning of the day appointed for the storm, the garrison, whose courage had been elevated to the highest pitch by the slow progress of the siege, * * * made a desperate sally upon the head of the trenches, gained possession of them for a time, and were repulsed only after they had killed the officer of His Majesty's 75th, commanding the advance, and many of the men. They gained and retained possession also of a trench in advance of the lines, from which it was proposed to dislodge them, and follow them closely into the breach. *The Europeans, however, of His Majesty's 75th and 76th, who were at the head of the column, refused to advance,* * * *. *The entreaties and expostulations of their officers failing to produce any effect, two regiments of Native Infantry, the 12th and 15th, were summoned to the front, and gallantly advanced to the storm.*"*

In the sentences italicized in the above extract, the very cowardly nature of the English soldiers is brought out in bold relief when compared with the courage and pluck of the Indian Sepoys. It was with the help of these Sepoys that the Bhurtpore garrison, which had made a desperate sally upon the head of the trenches, were repulsed. But of course these Sepoys could not retrieve the disaster of the day or gain possession of Bhurtpore by assault as

* H. H. Wilson's Note to his edition of Mill's History of India, Vol. vi, page 426.

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their British leaders were in the same predicament as their comrades. So necessarily the third attempt to carry the place by assault proved a failure like the two previous ones. But for the courage and pluck of the Sepoys by whom the Bhurtpore garrison were repulsed, there is no doubt that the English in India would have fared very badly and their power altogether sapped. Had not the Bhurtpore garrison been repulsed it is probable they would have made short work of the British soldiers who had been seized with panic and were insubordinate in refusing to advance. It was the much abused Indian Sepoys who preserved the English from utter ruin.

Although the third attempt of the Commander-in-chief to capture Bhurtpore was a huge failure, he did not cease from sending clap-trap despatches to the Marquess Wellesley designed to minister to the war-fever and to persuade that all was well when it was not well. That these despatches are not reliable, and that if any one were to attempt to base his history on those official documents, such an attempt would be a failure, would be evident from the fact that the cowardly manner in which the British soldiers behaved, and the courage and pluck which Indian Sepoys exhibited in repulsing the Bhurtpore garrison find no place in the despatches of General Lake to the Governor-General or of the

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Governor-General in Council to the Secret Committee of the East India Company. Even Mr. Mill (vi. 425) is obliged to write:—

"One of the most remarkable, perhaps, of all the events in the history of the British nation in India, is the difficulty, found by this victorious army, of subduing the capital of a petty Raja of Hindustan. The circumstances have not been sufficiently disclosed, for, on the subject of these unsuccessful attacks, the reports of the Commander-in-Chief are laconic. As general causes, he chiefly alleges the extent of the place, the number of its defenders, the strength of its works, and, lastly, the incapacity of his engineers; as if a Commander-in-Chief were fit for his office who is not himself an engineer."

But it is not easy for any English writer to lay his finger on the real causes of the failure of the force under the command of General Lake in subduing Bhurtpore. All the victories which the Britishers had so far attained in India, were gained by means of treachery and fraud and not by means of the sword or fair fight alone. Fortunately, the Raja of Bhurtpore and Holkar had not at this time any British officer or soldier in their employ. And so the English found it difficult to corrupt and demoralize the defenders of Bhurtpore. Among the defenders there were as yet no traitors.

General Lake's force had been augmented by the arrival of the army of Guzerat. This division was, as said before, under the command of Colonel

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Murray, who, after capturing all the possessions of Holkar in the Central India, returned to Guzerat, handing over the command to Major-General Jones. This army arrived at Bhurtpore on the 12th February and took part in the third unsuccessful assault on Bhurtpore and other succeeding operations.

Holkar's cavalry, as said before, was outside the town of Bhurtpore. It had been joined also by the light horse under Ameer Khan. This cavalry was giving no end of trouble to the English by cutting off their supplies and attacking convoys. Had Ameer Khan thrown his heart and soul into harassing the British camp and column and co-operated heartily with Holkar in the struggle, there can be no doubt that the fate of the British would have been for ever sealed in India. But Ameer Khan did everything in a very perfunctory and half-hearted manner. It has already been hinted at before, that the English were in secret understanding with Ameer Khan, though he was not as yet completely bought off. From Ameer Khan's Memoirs, (p. 250) it appears that the Raja of Bhurtpore advised him to act in concert with Holkar. The Raja is reported to have said,

> "as both Sirdars could not act well together in the same field, it would be better that one should remain at Bhurtpore while the other headed an incursion into the enemy's territory, and carried the war thither."

Accordingly, Ameer Khan went upon this ex-

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pedition. To pursue Ameer Khan, General Lake had detached the cavalry under General Smith, who did not find much difficulty in reducing the Afghan adventurer's force. It seems to us that as Ameer Khan was hunting with the hound and running with the hare, he played into the hands of the English by suffering the destruction of the men who were principally the remnants of Holkar's cavalry. Ameer Khan returned to Bhurtpore, and rejoined Holkar on the 20th March, 1805. General Smith also returning three days' afterwards (*i.e.*, on the 23rd March), rejoined General Lake.

When the news of the third unsuccessful attempt in subduing Bhurtpore reached the Governor-General, he seems to have been much depressed and concerned at the failure. On the 5th March he forwarded to General Lake (who in the meanwhile had been raised to the peerage and henceforth known as Lord Lake) notes of instructions to terminate the war as soon as possible. Before dealing with these Notes, on which the opinions of the Commander-in-Chief were invited, it is necessary to refer to the letter, which the Marquess Wellesley wrote to Lord Lake on the 9th March, 1805. In that letter the Governor-General wrote:—

"In reading over my private communications to Your Lordship, I fear that you may be impressed with an opinion that I feel too strong a desire for the early termina-

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tion of the war, even on any terms. * * * I request Your Lordship not to attempt to renew the siege without full and ample means for its prosecution; not to attempt any assault while the least doubt exists of success. *I fear that we have despised the place and enemy so much as to render both formidable.*

"The resumption of the siege of Bhurtpore previously to the pursuit of Holkar is also a point which I must seriously recommend to your attention. Unless the reduction of the place be absolutely necessary previously to that pursuit, or essential to our honour, I wish Your Lordship to consider whether the risk of another failure, and the consequent loss (to say no more), ought to be hazarded. * * * The health of the troops must also be most seriously and tenderly considered."

In plain language, then, the Governor-General had become quite tired of the war and desired for peace, almost on any terms. This will also be evident from the Notes to which reference will be presently made.

The only silver lining to the dark cloud in which the political horizon of the English in India was enshrouded was the success of General Smith over Ameer Khan. In his 'private' letter of 13th March, 1805, the Marquess Wellesley wrote to Lord Lake:—

"This moment I have received an account of General Smith's highly meritorious conduct in overtaking and defeating Ameer Khan at Ufzulghur. I now trust that the effects of that incursion will prove favorable, and that the robber and assassin will meet his deserts. I conclude that

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General Smith will hunt the tiger in the jungles into destruction."

It is not understood why General Smith did not pursue Ameer Khan, but allowed him to rejoin Holkar.

The Governor-General's "Notes" under date the 5th March, 1805, throw much light on the methods employed by the English in getting out of the Bhurtpore imbroglio. These "Notes" were addressed to Lord Lake, who was invited to give his opinions thereon. The intrigues which had been set afoot can be easily seen through these "notes." Some of the notes together with the opinions of Lord Lake on them are given below. The Marquess Wellesley wrote:—

"While the Commander-in-Chief is preparing for the siege of Bhurtpore, or actually engaged in it, might it not be advisable to endeavour to detach Runjeet Sing from Holkar? Although Bhurtpore has not fallen, Runjeet Sing is certainly much reduced and alarmed, and Holkar would be hopeless if abandoned by Runjeet Sing."

To this note, Lord Lake replied as follows:—

"Every endeavour is making, and will be made to detach Runjeet Sing from Holkar. Runjeet Sing is certainly much reduced in money and greatly alarmed. Holkar and his followers would have little hope if abandoned by Runjeet Sing."

This shows how intrigues had been set afoot to detach the Raja of Bhurtpore from Holkar.

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Another "Note" of the Governor-General runs as follows:—

"Might it not be stated to Runjeet Sing that, although his fate has been delayed, he must know it to be inevitable, that a few weeks more must destroy him altogether; that his only certainty of escape is to throw himself upon the clemency of the British Government, and renounce Holkar altogether, in which case he will be admitted to pardon, and restored to his possessions?"

This shows climbing down on the part of the Governor-General. It will be remembered that when he finally approved of the war with the Raja of Bhurtpore, he wrote to General Lake, in his 'secret and official' letter dated 20th December, 1804, that

"the entire reduction of the power and resources of the Raja of Bhurtpore however, is now become indispensably necessary, and I accordingly authorize and direct your Excellency to adopt immediate arrangements for the attainment of that desirable object, and for the annexation to the British power, in such manner as your Excellency may deem most consistent with the public interests, of all the forts, territories, and possessions belonging to the Raja of Bhurtpore."

General Lake had also advocated the spoliation of all the possessions of the Raja of Bhurtpore. In his 'private' letter to the Marquess Wellesley dated Muttra, 30th November, 1804, he wrote:—

"He (the Raja of Bhurtpore) certainly deserves no

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favor from our Government, as his conduct has been the most unprovoked and violent that ever was heard of."

But now Lord Lake had also to climb down. He was now trying his best to bring about reconciliation with the Raja of Bhurtpore by means of sweet and specious promises as the following observation of his on the Governor-General's "Note" shows. In reply to the Marquess Wellesley's "Note" he wrote:—

"Every means has been attempted to show Runjeet Sing how fruitless any attempts of his to oppose the British Government must prove.

"A correspondence is now going on between me and Runjeet Sing, which I am in hopes will lead to an accommodation sufficiently favorable to the British Government, and prevent any future union of interests between that Chief and Jeswunt Rao Holkar."

This was really a climb down for Lord Lake and shows how busily engaged he was in carrying on intrigues to detach the Raja from Holkar.

The Marquess Wellesley, it would seem, was in favor of raising the siege of Bhurtpore, for one of his 'Notes' ran as follows:—

"The two great objects now to be accomplished, are the expulsion of Holkar and the protection of our own territories; the reduction of Runjeet Sing, or of Bhurtpore, is only important as connected with those objects."

On this 'Note', Lord Lake observed:

"Either an amicable accommodation with Runjeet Sing,

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or the reduction of Bhurtpore will enable me to expel Holkar and Ameer Khan, but their expulsion previously will not be possible."

Ameer Khan was the man with whom the Britishers had been carrying on intrigues since a long time past. That Afghan adventurer was, as has been said so often before, hunting with the hound and running with the hare. While professing to be a partizan of Holkar, he did not consider it inconsistent with his sense of honor to listen to the overtures of the British. It was their interest to buy over Ameer Khan. So the Governor-General wrote in a "Note":—

"Mr. Seton and General Smith should be authorized to offer a settlement of land to such of Ameer Khan's followers as would quit him. Even Ameer Khan himself might be offered a jagheer, if he will quit Holkar's cause, submit to the British Government, and come into General Smith's camp within a stated period of time."

To this 'Note', Lord Lake replied as follows:—

"A settlement in lands should certainly be offered to Ameer Khan's followers.

"Ameer Khan is most exorbitant in his demands. He asks thirty-three lacs of rupees in the first instance, and a jagheer for 10,000 horse. This was his proposal in Rohilcund, and I doubt much if he would now be more moderate, as his battalions and guns have joined Scindhia."

From the above, the manner in which the

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Britishers were intriguing with Ameer Khan and his followers is quite evident. It may also be safely presumed that Ameer Khan betrayed Holkar in order to curry favor with the English and also in the hope of some day gaining his object from them, namely, thirty-three lacs of rupees in cash and a jagheer for 10,000 horse. When we take into consideration the critical position in which the English were placed at this time in India, we are inclined to believe that Ameer Khan was given to understand by them that his demand would be complied with, and it was thus that he played false to Holkar. It also appears to us that General Smith did not vanquish and defeat Ameer Khan but prevailed on his followers to desert their Afghan leader by holding out to them the temptation of a settlement of land and other pecuniary gains.

After the three unsuccessful attempts at subduing Bhurtpore, the Britishers were not very anxious to renew offensive operations against it. As said before, they were trying to negotiate with the Raja of Bhurtpore for peace. Although the Raja had the satisfaction of seeing the thorough humiliation of the English, it was necessary for him to attend to his own safety. The Raja did not lose his penetration in this perplexed state of affairs ; conjecturing that Ameer Khan had been playing false with Holkar, and despairing of any assistance from Scindhia or any

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other prince in India, he found it necessary not to reject the terms which were offered to him.

We have already narrated on a previous page, how the English were bullying the Raja of Nagpore on the mere suspicion that he intended to join Holkar or render assistance to him. Although Scindhia had been promised the territories which would be conquered from Holkar, yet he discovered how he had been duped, and was therefore anxious to sever the alliance he had entered into with the English. When the news of their repeated failures in subduing Bhurtpore reached Scindhia, there is no doubt that he intended to join Holkar and thus try to regain some of his lost possessions. We have already stated the manner in which he narrated his grievances in a letter he wrote to the Governor-General, extracts from which have already been given on a previous page. If there was ever any favorable opportunity for Scindhia to recover his lost possessions, it was now when nothing but gloom surrounded the English in India. Why Scindhia did not take advantage of the golden opportunity which presented itself to him has remained an enigma to many. His contingent under Bapu Scindhia and Sadhasheorao Bhow had joined Holkar. And could he but have come and joined Holkar, it would have been very hard, if not impossible, for the English to extricate themselves from the critical position they were in. The inability of

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Sindhia to join Holkar seems to us to have been due to the treachery of his Christian officers. At this time of which we are writing, John Baptiste Filose was the virtual Commander-in-Chief of Sindhia's army. He was a Christian half-caste. It is probable that he was in intrigue with the English and thus prevented Scindhia joining Holkar. Our conjecture derives support from the fact that Sindhia about this time placed this man under arrest because he suspected his loyalty and good faith. Regarding this arrest, the grandson of John Baptiste Filose thus wrote in the *Asiatic Quarterly Review* for April,, 1889 :

"When Colonel Filose had thus distinguished himself by so many successful undertakings, probably standing higher in Scindhia's favor than any of the other foreign officers, jealousy began to appear in various quarters. The Maharaja Holkar had employed a few Europeans, but he had never placed full confidence in them. He now reminded Scindhia, in one of their private interviews, that he was on bad terms with the English, and that, under the circumstances, it was unsafe to place Colonel Filose in such a high position. For should these foreign officers join the English, as they probably would, Scindhia would find it impossible to defend himself. He therefore recommended that on some excuse or other Filose should be placed under arrest."

Now, we do not understand the solicitude of Holkar to advise Scindhia to place John Baptiste under arrest, had he not been smarting under the wrongs

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and injuries he suffered at the hands of the British which he knew he would not have done had Scindhia joined him. It is impossible to state all that transpired in the private interviews between Holkar and Scindhia. But Scindhia would not have taken such a step as that of placing Filose under arrest, had he not been convinced by Holkar's reasonings and arguments that his inability to repair to Bhurtpore in time and join Holkar was due to the treachery of John Baptiste Filose. From the words of Lord Lake in his letter to the Governor-General dated Agra 22nd September, 1804, it should also be presumed that John Baptiste was carrying on intrigues with the English. General Lake then wrote:—

"He (John Baptiste) is desirous of coming to me but requires a lac and a half of rupees to pay his troops. He is reported to be a good and fair man, and by what I have seen of him lately from his correspondence, has every appearance of being so; but I must be more convinced that he is so before I give him money, at any rate not to that extent; if he does anything worth notice it will be time enough to pay him then."

Reading the above, there can be very little doubt then of John Baptiste Filose's treachery, and Holkar seems to us to have been right in attributing the inability of Sindhia to join him to this traitor being in his camp.

This was the position then of the Raja of

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Bhurtpore. He had helped the destitute Holkar when the affairs of the latter were at their lowest ebb. With his characteristic ideal of oriental hospitality, he had given refuge to Holkar, knowing fully well the risk he was running and the punishment that would have been inflicted on him by the vindictive English if they succeeded in subduing his capital. But when he saw that he had single-handed to fight with the odds opposed against him and when he did not expect any assistance from any quarter and when he discovered that Ameer Khan was not in hearty co-operation with Holkar the instinct of self-preservation dictated him to lend a favorable ear to the overtures made to him by the English. Resistance against them under the circumstances we have alluded to was hopeless. Hence, little fault should be found with him for his willingness to treat with them. It should also be remembered that it was not he who sued for peace with them, but it was they who opened the negotiations for peace with him. To his credit it should also be prominently mentioned that surrender of Holkar into the hands of the English did not enter into the Treaty of Peace. The English were anxious to get possession of the person of Holkar. To them the reduction of the power of the Raja of Bhuratpore was not such a desirable object as the capture of Holkar. In his despatches and notes of instructions to General Lake, the

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Governor-General has over and over again reminded him of the necessity of pursuing Holkar to extremity. In his "Notes" of the 5th March, 1805, it is stated :—

"The two great objects now to be accomplished, are the expulsion of Holkar and the protection of our own territories; the reduction of Runjeet Sing, or of Bhurtpore, is only important as connected with those objects."

Again in his "Notes" of the 10th March, the Governor-General wrote :—

"It would certainly be highly advantageous, if practicable, to drive off Holkar altogether, and to pursue him to extremity even during the siege.

* * * * *

"If the siege of Bhurtpore should not be resumed, I hope that an immediate attack will be made upon Holkar, and that he will be vigorously pursued to extremity, by a properly equipped force.

* * * * *

"The great object therefore even with respect to Scindhia is the reduction of Holkar, * * * ."

The English having been so anxious for the reduction of Holkar, it is not tasking one's intelligence too much to suppose that the Commander-in-Chief must have held up temptations and allurements and made sweet and specious promises to the Raja of Bhurtpore to induce him to surrender Holkar into his hands. It should be remembered that the person of Holkar was entirely at the mercy of the Raja of

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Bhurtpore. General Lake must have employed every conceivable means to get possession of the person of Holkar. It is, therefore, highly creditable to the Raja, that he did not curry favour with the English by surrendering the person of Holkar into their hands, as did his name-sake of the Panjab, not very many months afterwards.

The siege of Bhurtpore was now to be at an end. The negotiations which the Commander-in-Chief had opened with the Raja terminated in the Treaty of Peace drawn up in the beginning of April, 1805. Holkar was allowed to depart from Bhurtpore towards the end of March, 1805. He ultimately fled towards the Punjab, where he thought that he would find an asylum in the country of the Sikhs. But he discovered his mistake not before long and he was pursued by the Commender-in-Chief.

On the 10th April, 1805, Lord Lake wrote to the Marquess Wellesley as follows:—

"I take the very earliest opportunity of informing you that peace is established between the British Government and Runjeet Sing. I trust the terms may be deemed proper by your Lordship. * * * *

"Holkar is reduced in the extreme; he has no troops, at least so few that they can do no more than guard his person, even those are starving, and he has not a rupee to give them. They have of late had a most wearisome life, and will not remain with him.

"I feel relieved by this negotiation, and although I

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have reason to think we should soon have been in possession of the town, I fear our troops must have suffered exceedingly from the heat. * * * *

"I hope and trust, this act of mine will meet your approbation; I felt the necessity of getting rid of this siege, that we might be ready for Scindhia, who will, I should imagine, give up his hostile intentions."

To show to the world that the English had punished the Raja for his so-called treachery to them, it was laid down on paper that he should be made to pay twenty lacs of rupees, and be deprived of Deig and the country granted to him the previous year. Of the fine of twenty lacs imposed on him, the Raja paid only three lacs to Lord Lake. It seems to us that this payment of three lacs by the Raja was a sort of make-believe, for the Raja was not then in a position to pay anything to the English. The fortress of Deig was restored to the Raja not very long afterwards, and so he did not lose anything by defying their authority and inflicting upon them the humiliation and disgrace of their repeated failures in subduing Bhurtpore.

Holkar should be looked upon as the savior of India at this critical juncture. On a previous occasion we described him as lacking in statesmanship. It is no doubt true that he played into the hands of the English and helped them in placing the yoke of the subsidiary alliance on the neck of the

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Peishwa and betrayed the Mahratta Confederates into the war. He did not join the Maratha Confederates and thus his conduct was most reprehensible. But when he discovered that the Britishers had made him their cat's paw in gaining their selfish ends and when he found how he had been duped by them, he prepared for war with them. He had benefited from the experience of Scindhia, and so before going to war with them, he very properly got rid of the foreign officers he had in his employ by executing them. This step of getting rid of the foreign servants saved him from the disgrace and disasters which had befallen Sindhia in his war with the English. It should be remembered that had Holkar not inflicted defeats on them, and thus arrested their career of successful intrigues and conspiracies, it is difficult to estimate to what extremity the country would have been then brought. The news of the disasters which had befallen the English in their unjust war with Holkar made such an impression on the minds of the people of England that they came to realize that their affairs in India were not safe in the hands of the then Governor-General. It will be remembered that the Marquess Wallesley had intimated his intention of resigning the service of the Company and of embarking for England in the month of January, 1803. But the confusion and disorder which he succeeded in creating in the Maratha

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Polity by his machinations, made him change his mind and ask the permission of the Court of Directors to stay on in India and to improve the interests of the British in India. He tried to bring about the ruin of the Maratha States, opened campaigns of intrigues and conspiracies against them, and declared unjust and unrighteous war on them and deprived them of their fertile territories and provinces.

Success like charity covers many sins. When this Governor-General was able to show to his co-religionists and compatriots in England the extension of their power in India by the annexation of fertile provinces, they forgot his faults and allowed him to stay on in India for almost an indefinite period and gave him a free hand in carrying out his policy.

Had Jeswunt Rao Holkar been subdued, not only would his dominion have been annexed by the British, but the map of India from the Himalaya to the Cape Comorin would have been dyed red by the Marquess Wellesley. It is true that Sindhia had been promised a portion of the territory conquered from Holkar. But, as pointed out before, it would not have taken the English long to discover some pretext to deprive Sindhia of his new acquisitions. In fact when the fate of the English was trembling in the balance, they did not hesitate in charging Sindhia with treachery, and on the termination of the war with Holkar, they would have certainly declared hostilities

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with Sindhia. Possessing very short memories, and altogether devoid of gratitude, it is not to be surprised at, that the English would have deprived of their possessions those princes who had in any way rendered them assistance in their hour of trial and need. Witness the treatment they meted out to the Raja of Bhurtpore. That prince was provoked to hostilities by the peremptory demands made on him by the Governor-General and the Commander-in-Chief, who both conspired in advocating spoliation of the Raja's possessions. They forgot the assistance they had received from the Raja in the war with Sindhia.

Supposing then that the Raja of Bhurtpore and Holkar had both been subdued by the English, is there any room for doubt that they would have gone to war with the other native princes of India and deprived them of their possessions and cherished rights and privileges? On some pretext or other, the states and principalities of Rajputana and Central India would have been annexed. The Sikhs in the Punjab had not then risen into a Power of whom the English took any notice. Indeed, that Irish soldier, George Thomas, had written to the Marquess Wellesley pointing out the ease with which the Sikhs could be subdued and the Punjab transformed into a province of the East India Company.

If ever the acquisition of the whole of India by

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the English was an easy affair, it was after the break up of the Maratha Confederacy and the destruction of the military resources and power of Sindhia and the Raja of Berar on the battle-fields of Assaye, Argaum and Laswaree. Had not Holkar come in the way, the Marquess of Wellesley would have accomplished what the Marquis Hastings and Lord Dalhousie even failed to do. The dream of Dalhousie to color the whole map of India red was never realized. If circumstances were against Dalhousie's scheme being carried into execution, there was no difficulty in the path of the Marquess Wellesley excepting the existence of Holkar, leading to the goal of annexation of all the States of Native India.

For these reasons then Holkar must be looked upon as the saviour of India. For although within a little over half-a-century the English rose to supreme power in India, their subsequent rise was altogether different from what it would have been had they come to possess it in the early years of the Nineteenth Century. The supremacy of the English in India in the time of the Marquess Wellesley would have been attended with consequences fatal to the very existence of Indians. The British would have looked upon India as a conquered country, and the Indians would not have been treated any better than the aborigines of other countries which the British have colonized. When the English

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rose to supreme power in India under Lord Dalhousie the line of policy on which India was to be governed was clearly although very faintly drawn by them. Fifty years of intercourse with the English had taught the natives of India to know the character of the new comers, and they had also been initiated into the language, literature and science of the natives of England. Thus those who could penetrate and see through the designs of Lord Dalhousie set in operation those forces which saved India from utter annihilation and brought her under the Crown and Parliament of England.

But the extension of the power of the English in India in the days of the Marquess Wellesley would not have been attended with those beneficial consequences which naturally followed half a century afterwards.

Success like charity, as said before, covers many sins. Had the English succeeded in their contest with Holkar, there is little doubt that, notwithstanding all his shortcomings, the Marquess Wellesley would have been granted an extension of several years' residence in India to carry out the policy which was so dear to the heart of Pitt, who was no Little Englander. The loss of America was to be made good, and, as already said before, Pitt commissioned the Marquess Wellesley to found an Empire for England in India. The successful resistance of

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Holkar then against the extension of the power of the English in India should be looked upon as providential for the welfare of India. Looked at in this light, we can share the belief with the Sepoys that Bhurtpore was under the care of Krishna. Mr. Thornton in his *Gezetteer* of India tells us that

> "in 1805, during the first siege, some of the native soldiers in the British service declared that they distinctly saw the town defended by that divinity, dressed in yellow garments, and armed with his peculiar weapons, the bow, mace, conch and pipe."

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CHAPTER XXXVIII.

THE LAST DAYS OF THE MARQUESS WELLESLEY IN INDIA.

After the raising of the siege of Bharatpur, the Marquess Wellesley's name is not connected with any other important political transaction in India, except his settlement of disputes with Scindhia. The nature of the disputes with Scindhia has already been alluded to; that that Maratha Prince had had grievances, which were not imaginary, against the Company, cannot be denied. Scindhia had threatened the English with a renewal of the war. With that object in view, he had moved out of Burhanpore and was on his march towards Bhurtpore . He had placed under arrest Mr. Jenkins, the British resident attached to his Court. This was against every received principle of the Law of Nations. But then that was the only way in which Scindhia could expect to draw the attention of the English to his wrongs and make them either declare hostilities against him or redress his grievances and wrongs. And subsequent events proved that he was not mistaken.

When it became known to the English that Scindhia was on his way to Bhurtpore, they remons-

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trated with him. Of course as said before, Scindhia could not reach Bharatpur in time when the siege was progressing, owing principally to the treachery of John Baptiste Filose.

It is the second time that Dowlut Rao Scindhia could not prevent the English from succeeding in gaining their ends. It will be remembered that Dowlut Rao Scindhia could not go to Poona in time to prevent the Peishwa from making the alliance with the British. Again, during the siege of Bhurtpore, he was unable to march on to that place and thus annihilate the latter. The words "Too Late" were ever written on all his expeditions undertaken with the object of frustrating the attempts of the British to obtain supremacy in India.

Scindhia finding himself helpless and unable to render any material assistance to either the Raja of Bhurtpore or Holkar during the siege, adopted a conciliatory tone in replying to the remonstrances of the British Government of India. He was at this time not far from the river Chambal and he declared that he was unable to proceed to settle his own country from the state of his finances, and that his object in marching towards Bhurtpore was to mediate a peace. He had also sent on a part of his cavalry and Pindaries towards Bhurtpore. But as said before, it was "too late", as the Raja had concluded the treaty with the English.

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Scindhia was promised pecuniary assistance provided he would return and employ himself in taking possession of Holkar's unoccupied districts in Malwa and apologise for his conduct in detaining and placing under arrest the British resident at his Court. Scindhia acquiesced and retired eight miles towards Subbulgurh. Holkar and Ameer Khan after leaving Bharatpur came and joined Scindhia at this place. This open junction of Holkar and Scindhia alarmed the English. But Scindhia tried to justify himself by explaining that Holkar had intended to plunder the territories then in the possession of the Britishers but at his request abandoned that design, and consented to his mediation for the attainment of peace ; to whom this explanation did not appear satisfactory. Lord Lake made preparations to attack Scindhia and Holkar. But the latter at first repaired to Kotah, and afterwards moved towards Ajmere. It was this move of Scindhia and Holkar which prevented Lake from pursuing and fighting them. In his letter marked "Private" and dated April 25, 1805, Lord Lake wrote to the Marquess Wellesley :—

"I have been honored with all your notes and directions respecting Dowlut Rao Scindhia which your Lordship may rest assured shall be carried into effect in the most direct and speedy manner possible. My only fear is, that on my approach, he with his confederates will retire, and that it will be impossible for me to follow him ; the country through which he will pass to the Deccan, being at this

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season so extremely hot, and almost entirely without water. * * * * The only difficulty is, that he and his confederates are so alarmed and weary that they never rest at night. * * There is no vile act these people are not equal to; that inhuman monster Holkar's chief delight is in butchering all Europeans, and by all accounts Serjie Rao Ghautka's disposition towards us is precisely the same. * "

On the receipt of this letter and on hearing the news of Scindhia's retirement the Marquess Wellesley directed Lord Lake not to pursue Scindhia or Holkar. In his 'Official and Secret' letter dated 17th May, 1805, the Marquess Wellesley wrote to Lord Lake :—

"As Scindhia has retired, it does not appear to me to be advisable for your Lordship to pursue him at this season, although it would certainly be justifiable to act hostilely against him, in consequence of his reception of Jeswunt Rao Holkar, and of Ameer Khan. It is however extremely desirable to avoid war with Dowlut Rao Scindhia. I should hope that he will not now seek it, and if it be possible to effect a settlement of Holkar's affairs without further war, such an arrangement would certainly be advisable."

But the English were not anxious to make peace or settle differences with Scindhia and Holkar ; they were only trying to gain time, and making preparations with the intention of renewing the war on the outbreak of the rainy season. In continuation of the letter from which the extract has been given above the Marquess Wellesley wrote :—

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"But although I expect that we may avoid war with Dowlut Rao Scindhia, I am decidedly of opinion that the best security for the preservation of peace, will be such a distribution of our armies as shall enable them to act against the enemy with vigor and celerity, in case Scindhia should commence hostilities, or Holkar again attempt to disturb the tranquility of our territories.

* * * * *

"For this purpose it will be necessary in the event of hostilities that the troops to be employed against Scindiha, or any freebooter who may attempt to violate our territories, should be completely ready to commence active operations as soon as the season will permit, and arrangements will of course be adopted by your Lordship for collecting supplies, &c., and for completing every other preparation which may be necessary to enable your Lordship to destroy Scindhia at any early period of the ensuing season.

"I sincerely hope that the active employment of our troops may become unnecessary, but I consider it to be requisite to request your Lordship's attention to the possible contingency of our being compelled to attack Scindhia, or to operate against Holkar about the month of August, or as soon as the violence of the rainy season may have subsided."

He advised Lord Lake to canton the troops in such a manner as would be easily available for renewing the war with Scindhia and Holkar if necessary. He wrote :—

"In cantoning the troops under your Lordship's command, it appears to me to be necessary to provide for the following objects :—

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"First. The subsidiary force with the Rana of Gohud, to be stationed either at Gohud or in some favorable position in that district.

"Secondly. A force in the province of Bundelcund sufficient to cover that province, and to enable the revenue officers to complete the settlement of the revenue.

"Thirdly. A force at Agra and Muttra.

"Fourthly. A force at Delhi, and in the northern part of the Doab"

There is very little doubt that had the Marquess Wellesley remained in India till August, 1805, he would have renewed the war with Scindhia and also with Holkar in order to wipe out the disgrace attendant on the unsuccessful siege of Bhurtpore. Lord Lake was also doing everything to minister to the war-fever. He had to retrieve his character as a general, and therefore he was so anxious to see the renewal of the war:

But, fortunately, the Marquess Wellesley had to leave India for good before the beginning of August, 1805. In a way, he was recalled from the Governor-Generalship of the country. His wars with the Marathas had swollen the debt of the East India Company to such an extent that the Directors were alarmed at the proceedings of the Marquess Wellesley. The natives of England never spent a single farthing out of their pockets in establishing their power in India. They came to India in the capacity of humble traders. They, as a nation of shop-keepers,

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wanted to make money by means fair or foul. But the wars in which the Marquess Wellesley involved the Company were not calculated to enrich them, nay, on the contrary they found that the East India trade was not a paying concern and they were not receiving a handsome dividend. Consequently, a hue and cry was raised in England against the Marquess Wellesley's policy based on Machiavellian maxims and suggestions and he was desired to return from India.* The Court of Directors severely and

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* How unpopular the Marquess Wellesley's war on Holkar was in England can be easily judged from the letter of the Marquis Cornwallis to Lieut.-General Ross dated Culford, Oct. 14, 1804. He wrote :—"If your account of Lord Wellesley's conduct did not come from so good authority, I should scarcely believe it possible that after having escaped the extreme hazards to which our interests in India were at various times exposed during the late contests with the Marathas, he should so soon, not only wantonly, but, according to Charles Grant's statement, criminally involve himself in all the difficulties of another war against an able and powerful Chief of that nation (*i.e.* Holkar). I should conceive that the Ministers would be inclined to bring him away, although they might be disposed to let him down easy."

Again, on the 6th Dec. 1804, the Marquis Cornwallis wrote to Lieut.-General Ross :—"Lord Castlereagh came here yesterday early from Lord Paget's" * * He told me that Mr. Pitt had entered thoroughly into the business, and, although he was disposed to show Lord Wellesley all the

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adversely criticized the Indian policy of the Governor-General. The Marquess Wellesley wrote to the Court of Directors on the 18th May, 1805 as follows :—

"The despatch from your honorable Court in the Political Department under date the 28th November, 1804, was received at Fort William on the 2nd instant, and a reply to it from the Governor-General in Council, will be submitted to your honorable Court by an early conveyance.

"I trust that the explanations which the Governor-General in Council offers to the indulgent consideration of your honorable Court, in answer to the remarks contained in your honourable Court's letter, may prove satisfactory to you; and I entertain a confident expectation that the

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attention which the circumstances could admit, he was decidedly of opinion that he had acted most imprudently and illegally, and that he could not be suffered to remain in the Government."

On the next day, that is, 7th Dec., 1804, the Marquis Cornwallis wrote to Lieut.-General Ross :—

"Amongst other charges, Lord Wellesley is attacked on account of the order for the commencement of hostilities against Holkar being signed only by himself, without any notification of its being done with the concurrence of his Council. Lord Castlereagh asked me in what cases the Governor General's signature alone was used; I said that I could not at this distance of time charge my memory exactly, but that I thought it was in the correspondence with the princes of the country, and with our Residents at their Courts, but that they were either read in Council or circulated to the Members."

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Governor-General in Council will also afford sufficient proof to your honorable Court that the motives and objects of all his endeavours in your service, have been the preservation and improvement of the interests of the Company, and of the nation in India.

"The present state of affairs in India appearing to admit of my early resignation of the office of Governor General, and my health being extremely precarious, I propose to embark for England in a ship of war as soon as the season will permit; Sir Edward Pellew has provided a vessel for the purpose, and I am therefore enabled to submit to your honorable Court this respectful notification of my fixed intention to deliver over the charge of this Government to Sir George Barlow, at that period of time."

But the Court of Directors did not wait for an explanation from the Marquess Wellesley regarding his doings in India. They nominated the Marquess Cornwallis as Governor-General and sent him out to India long before they could have received the Marquess Wellesley's letter reproduced above. Lord Castlereagh, in his letter dated London, Jan. 18, 1805, but received by the Marquess Wellesley on the 25th May, 1805, wrote to him:—

"I am happy to have it in my power to acquaint you that Lord Cornwallis has consented again to undertake the government of India. His long experience in that situation, his eminent public character, and the relation in which he stands from former habits both to Sir George Barlow, * * * to the Court of Directors, and also to the King's Government, renders his appointment under present circumstances peculiarly advantageous."

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At that time the English wanted peace at any cost in India. Lord Cornwallis was supposed to be a man who loved peace more than anything else. But that was, no doubt, a mistake. When the news of the successful campaigns of the Hon'ble Major-General Wellesley and Lieut.-General Lake against the Marathas reached England, Lord Cornwallis wrote a letter of congratulation to the Marquess Wellesley. The letter marked 'Private' and dated Burlington Street, April 30th, 1804, was received by the Marquess Wellesley on the 27th September, 1804. In it he wrote :—

"I can with truth assure you that I have felt much anxiety during the course of your Maratha warfare, being well aware of the difficulties against which you had to contend, and I now sincerely congratulate you on your brilliant successes.

"The important and glorious achievements of my friends, General Lake and Wellesley, have afforded me the most sincere satisfaction.

"As I am now growing old, and perhaps out of fashion, it is not likely that I should again be selected for any active situation.

"My wishes, however, continue to be as warm as they ever were for the honour and welfare of my country ; and I earnestly hope that, in every part of the globe, its interests will be promoted by as able statesmen, and its armies conducted by as meritorious generals, as those who have of late been entrusted with the preservation of our Asiatic Empire."

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The man who could express the sentiments quoted above and congratulate the author of the most unjust and unjustifiable war on the Marathas, can hardly be called a lover of peace. Cornwallis was as great a follower of Pitt as was the Marquess Wellesley ; and Pitt, as has been so often said before, was no Little Englander. It seems to us that Cornwallis was sent out for the second time to India to carry out the policy of Pitt in extending the power of the British in India. The reputation which Cornwallis enjoyed as a peace-loving man blinded the natives of England from seeing the man in his true colors. The only difference between Cornwallis and the Marquess Wellesley was that the latter wanted to extend the power of England in India as speedily as possible and he was running at a speed which did not commend itself to the more thoughtful followers of Pitt.

The Marquess Cornwallis landed at Madras on the 18th July, 1805. On the following day, he wrote to the Marquess Wellesley :—

"I arrived last night at this anchorage, when I learned that your Lordship is still in Bengal. I have therefore requested the Admiral to despatch an express vessel, to inform you that it is my intention to proceed in three or four days to Calcutta, in order that my arrival might be as little inconvenient to your Lordship as possible."

The Marquess Cornwallis arrived in Calcutta on

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the 30th July and took over the charge of the Government of India the same day. The Marquess Wellesley embarked in His Majesty's ship the *Howe* on the 15th of August and left India for good.

Thus left the shores of India that ruler who heaped nothing but miseries on that country and whose name is not associated with any act for which the natives of India would cherish his memory with gratitude. He was the greatest follower of Machiavelli whom England ever sent out to India. After his return to England, an attempt was made in the House of Commons at his impeachment, but with what result has already been mentioned in some of the previous chapters.

The accusers of Lord Wellesley would not have moved their little fingers against him had not his administration of India deprived their country of the expected remittance home of eight millions pounds sterling. In his speech in the House of Commons on Feb. 25, 1806, relating to the affairs of India, Mr. Paull said:—

"By the act of 1793, after the payment of the military and civil establishment, the act enjoins that a sum not less than one million of pounds sterling shall be applied for commercial purposes, and remitted to Great Britain, to form a part of its national wealth. Since 1798, no sum whatever has been applied to commercial purposes, and the law has

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been violated in this single instance to a sum exceeding 8 millions. To this extent, and to this amount has this commercial nation been deprived of such an import from our colonies, which the law ordered and enjoined."

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CHAPTER XXXIX.

LORD CORNWALLIS'S SECOND INDIAN ADMINISTRATION.

(*July to October 1805.*)

Lord Cornwallis arrived in Madras on the 19th of July and from there proceeded on his voyage to Bengal on the 23rd and arrived in Calcutta on July 29th and was sworn in on the following day. He found the affairs of the Company disorganised and the Treasury empty. The critical situation of the political affairs in India was thus described by him in his letter dated August 1st, 1805, to the Secret Committee :—

"Finding to my great concern that we are still at war with Holkar, and that we can hardly be said to be at peace with Scindhia, I have determined to proceed immediately to the upper provinces, that I may be at hand to avail myself of the interval which the present rainy season must occasion in the military operations, to endeavour, if it can be done without a sacrifice of our honour, to terminate by negotiation a contest in which the most brilliant success can afford us no solid benefit, and which, if it should continue, must involve us in pecuniary difficulties, which we should hardly be able to surmount."

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On the same day, he wrote to Lord Castlereagh :—

"I entertain scarcely any hope that it will be in my power to come to an amicable accommodation with Scindhia, who still keeps the assistant of our Residency under restraint, as I understand that Lord Wellesley has guaranteed to the Rana of Gohud the supremacy which Scindhia claims over Gohud and the fortress of Gwalior.

"These possessions are too remote in my opinion to make it desirable for us to have anything to do with them, * * *.

"My statements of our poverty are by no means overcharged, notwithstanding the former violent transactions in Oudh. Lord Wellesley has borrowed 20 lacks of the Vizier, and has written to press him for 10 more. Our credit has, I believe, been tried to the utmost at Benares and other places."

Cornwallis left Calcutta on the 8th August and proceeded by the river to the Upper Provinces, with the intention of bringing about peace with the Maratha princes. It was the pecuniary difficulties which the British government had to experience at this time which compelled them to sue for peace.

Owing to the low state of finances, it is not surprising that Lord Cornwallis tried to upset the political transactions of his predecessor. The Marquess Wellesley was congratulated on the success which had attended his intrigues in gaining possession of the person of Shah Alum. But regarding this

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possession Lord Cornwallis thus wrote to Colonel Malcolm on the 14th August, 1805:—

"I consider our possession of the person of Shah Allum and the town of Delhi as events truly unfortunate; and unless I should be able to persuade His Majesty to move further to the eastward, we can only secure him from the danger of being carried off, by the maintenance of a large army in the field, which will be an expense that our funds cannot bear. I deprecate the efforts of the almost universal frenzy, which has seized even some of the heads which I thought the soundest in the country, for conquest and victory, as opposite to the interests, as it is to the laws, of our country."

In his letter to Lord Lake, dated Sept. 19th 1805, Lord Cornwallis unfolded his plan of terminating disputes, and bringing about peace with the Maratha States of India. The letter is a long one, but it is so important, that the following extracts from it are given, as they express his views as to what he would have done had he lived a few months more. He wrote:—

"The first and most important object of my attention, is a satisfactory adjustment of all differences between the British Government and Dowlut Rao Scindhia, the principal obstacles to which appear to be—on the part of Scindhia, the release of the British Resident,—and on our part the cession to that chieftain of the fortress of Gwalior and the province of Gohud. I am aware of the disadvantages of immediately relinquishing, or even of compromising the demand which has been so repeatedly and so urgently

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made for the release of the British Resident; but I deem it proper to apprise your Lordship, that as a mere point of honour, I am disposed to compromise or even to abandon that demand, if it should ultimately prove to be the only obstacle to a satisfactory adjustment of affairs with Dowlut Rao Scindhia; and that I have hitherto been induced to support it by the apprehension that the motives of such a concession might be misinterpreted, and that it might lead to demands on the part of Scindhia, with which we could not comply without a sacrifice of dignity and interest incompatible with our security, and thereby render still more difficult of attainment the desirable object of a general pacification.

"With regard to the cession of Gwalior and Gohud, in my decided opinion it is desirable to abandon our possession of the former, and our connexion with the latter, independently of any reference to a settlement of differences with Dowlut Rao Scindhia. * * *.

"But however desirous I am to relinquish our possession of Gwalior and our connexion with Gohud, it is not my intention to accede to the unconditional surrender of those places. * * * * * *.

"In conformity to the preceding observations, the following is the general plan of arrangement which I am desirous of concluding with Dowlut Rao Scindhia:—

"1st. To make over to Scindhia the possession of Gwalior and Gohud.

"2nd. To transfer to him, according to the provisions of the treaty of peace, the districts of Dholpoor, Baree, and Rajkerree; and to account to Scindhia for the collections from those districts since the peace.

* * * * * *

"3rd. The eventual restoration of the Jeynagar (Jey-

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poor) tribute, amounting, I understand, to the annual sum of 3 lacs of rupees.

"4th. To require from Scindhia his consent to the abrogation of the pensions, and to the resumption of the jaghires in the Duab, established by the treaty of peace.

"5th. To require from Scindhia the relinquishment of his claim to the arrears of the pension.

"6th. To demand a compensation for the public and private losses sustained by the plunder of the Residency.

"7th. To require Scindhia to make a provision for the Rana of Gohud to the extent of 2½ or 3 lacs of rupees per annum, which I should conceive to be amply sufficient.

* * * * * *

"With regard to Scindhia's own expectations of obtaining the grant of a portion of the territory conquered from Holkar by the British arms, Your Lordship is apprised of my inclination to restore the whole of those conquests to Holkar; Your Lordship, therefore, will not encourage any such expectation on the part of Scindhia.

* * * * * *

"From the tenor of the communications which I have received relative to the views and disposition of Dowlut Rao Scindhia, there is every reason to believe that, if assured of the cession of Gwalior and Gohud, he would be ready, not only to open a negotiation with the British Government for the adjustment of other points, but also to comply with the demand which has hitherto been declared to be indispensable preliminary to any negotiation. * * * But being anxious to remove every obstacle to the proposed negotiation, and being resolved eventually to cede to Scindhia the possession of Gwalior and Gohud, I am not aware of any material objection to a candid declaration to Scindhia of my intentions in his favour, on

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the condition of his separation from Holkar, and his compliance with the demand for the release of the British Resident. * * * * I have deemed it advisable to combine with a declaration to that effect, a statement of the general principles of policy by which I am desirous of regulating the conduct of the British Government towards all the states of India. I am anxious to promulgate those principles, with a view to restore to the native states that confidence in the justice and moderation of the British Government, which past events have considerably impaired, and which appears to me to be essential to the security and tranquility of the Company's dominions. * * * * *

"I now proceed to state to Your Lordship the plan which occurs to me for the disposal of the territory to the westward and southward of Delhi, without assigning any portion of it to Dowlut Rao Sicindhia.

"The plan which I propose is to assign from it, jaghires to the several chiefs who have joined our cause, and for whom, with the irregular troops under their command, we are bound to provide, and to divide the remainder between the Rajas of Machery and Bhurtpore,"

Such were the measures which Lord Cornwallis contemplated to adopt towards the Maratha princes to settle the disputes with them. Had he lived a few months more, he would have been able to carry his views into execution.

Cornwallis, on his arrival in Calcutta, found that the army had not received any pay for several months. Writing to Viscount Castlereagh, on Aug. 9, 1805, he said :—

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"Lake's army, the pay of which amounts to about five lacs per month, is above five months in arrear. An army of irregulars, composed chiefly of deserters from the enemy, which with the approbation of Government, the general assembled by proclamation, and which costs about six lacs per month, is likewise somewhat in arrear."

If the troops were not immediately paid, he saw the danger of mutiny. Money had to be found, but how to do it? In the letter to Lord Castlereagh referred to above, he wrote:—

"How . . . an army to be kept together with an empty treasury? For the next two months we can expect nothing from the Collectors, and our only dependence is on the small supply of bullion sent from England."

England never spent a farthing for establishing her Empire in India, and she was not going to aid the latter country when she was in great financial difficulties. Cornwallis hit on the expediency of taking the bullion out of the ships at Madras which were destined for China, and also to reduce the number of troops.

But what he intended to do would not perhaps have met with the approval of the home authorities, for in 1791, the Directors of the Company thought that such a procedure interfered with their pecuniary advantages as merchants. To convince those cold and calculating men in authority that such a step

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would not affect their pecuniary interests, he wrote to the Court of Directors on the 9th August, 1805 :—

"You may be assured, that if the provision of your full investment from China could be affected in any degree by the consequences of the measure I have adopted, I should have preferred struggling through our difficulties under every possible disadvantage, rather than have subjected you to the disappointment which an insufficiency of funds in China might have occasioned; but upon the fullest information I can obtain of the present state of the trade between the ports of India and Canton, it is evident it will only require, that permission should be given to your select committee there to extend the receipt of money for bills on Bengal to an amount equivalent to the treasure detained at Madras; and such is the astonishing increase of the exports from India, especially in the articles of opium and cotton from this place, within these few years, that there can not be a doubt of the amplest supplies being tendered for their acceptance, the experience of last year having proved that offers of money exceeded the demands of your treasury there to the amount of near forty lacs of rupees, and as the exports of the present year are increased, even beyond those of the last, there can be as little doubt of an equal abundant resource being open this season, to the acceptance of your supercargoes at Canton."

He informed the Court of Directors that "this treasure has already had some effect in lowering the discount upon the paper."

Cornwallis and Lake had served in Ireland and

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helped to bring about the Union of that country with Great Britain.

He must have remembered the abominable deeds perpetrated by Lake in Ireland to provoke the natives of that country to rebellion. The task of pacifying Ireland fell to the lot of Lord Cornwallis. In one of his letters, Lord Cornwallis thus described the state of affairs in Ireland when he went there as Lord Lieutenant of that country. He wrote:—

"On my arrival in this country I put a stop to the burning of houses and murder of the inhabitants by the yeomen, or any other persons who delighted in that amusement; to the flogging for the purpose of extorting confession; and to the free quarters, which comprehend universal rape and robbery throughout the whole country."

It should be remembered that General Lake was then in Ireland as the Commander-in-Chief and all these atrocities by the yeomen were committed with his connivance, if not by his actual orders. Lord Cornwallis, moreover, knew from his experience in Ireland that General Lake was not a tactician, or a skilful general. He was, also, fully acquainted with the nature of Lake as a "truculent ruffian." It was not considered safe by him that Lake should continue to exercise the powers which had been vested in him by Wellesley. Cornwallis came out in the dual capacity of Governor-General and Commander-in-Chief. He made Lake understand that the latter was no

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longer the supreme head of the army in India or the sole arbiter of the fates of the princes in Hindustan with whom he made war. The first official letter which he penned in India the very day he was sworn in was addressed to Lord Lake, to whom he wrote:—

"I have this day taken upon me the office of Governor-General and Commander-in-Chief, and I lose no time in acquainting you with my intention of proceeding up the country in a very few days. . . . I should wish that you would not engage in any act of aggression, unless it might appear to be necessary in order to secure your own army from *serious* danger, until I can come to you, or you can have further communication with me."

This letter from Cornwallis came as a thunderbolt from the blue to Lake, who only five days previously (*i.e.*, on 25th July) was told by the Governor-General in Council that

"Great danger must inevitably be produced by our abstaining from the prosecution of hostilities at the earliest practicable period of time, . . .

"In conformity to these sentiments, the Governor-General in Council now authorizes and directs your Excellency to be prepared to commence active operations against the confederated forces as soon as the season will admit, and the Governor-General in Council requests that your Excellency will transmit with the least practicable delay a plan of operations for the eventual prosecution of hostilities in every quarter of Hindustan and the Deccan."

But Cornwallis's letter put an end to Lake's

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ambition of winning the laurels and glories of War. He was opposed to the policy of Cornwallis, because he had adopted the views of Wellesley. It was, therefore, natural for him to have remonstrances with the new Governor-General, who had, it seemed to him, usurped his appointment of Commander-in-Chief of India and so he thought his occupation was gone. To smooth the ruffled feelings of that "truculent ruffian," the aged Marquis wrote to him several conciliatory letters. But he firmly told him that he should obey his command. Writing to him on September 1, 1805, he said:—

"Nothing could make me believe that you would be induced to deviate in the slightest degree from any of my views while acting under my command."

In another long letter, dated Sept. 19, which occupies nearly nine printed pages of the Cornwallis Correspondence, the Governor-General gave his views to Lake on the political affairs of India.

But nothing that Cornwallis did or said seemed to pacify Lake, who intended to resign his command in India and return to England. The last letter which Cornwallis wrote while alive was the one addressed to Lake, dated 23rd September, 1805. He commenced the letter as follows:—

"It would be difficult to describe to you the feelings of regret and concern that have been produced on my mind, by the receipt of Your Lordship's public and private letters

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of the 13th instant . . . especially after the full persuasion I had been impressed with, of the thorough cordiality with which you had contemplated my arrival in India in the stations of Governor-General and Commander-in-Chief. . .

"Your Lordship well knows that I have never yet accepted a civil government to which the military authority was not also annexed, . . .

"I wish, before you take any decisive steps in regard to a return to Europe, that you would as candidly and freely explain to me, my dear Lord, the ideas which you had formed of the powers and authority intended to be vested in you, . . . "

There can be little doubt that the uncompromising attitude of Lake preyed on the mind of Cornwallis and hastened his death. He died at Ghazipur, where his remains were interred and over which a handsome mausoleum has been erected by public subscription in India.

Cornwallis died without attaining any of the objects for the accomplishment of which he had been sent out for a second time to India.

His second tenure of office was not even of three months' duration. He was not able to either effect any reform or commit any mischief in the administration of India. The situation of political affairs in India stood exactly as left by the Marquess Wellesley on his departure from India. But there can be no doubt that the pacific intention and conciliatory spirit ex-

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hibited by Lord Cornwallis had considerable effect in smoothing and paving the way towards bringing about peace with the Maratha princes.

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CHAPTER XL.

SIR GEORGE BARLOW'S ADMINISTRATION (1805-1807).

THE TERMINATION OF THE SECOND MARATHA WAR AND PEACE WITH THE MARATHAS.

The war which the Marquess Wellesley had begun with the Marathas did not end in peace with his departure from India. As said before, had he remained a few months longer in India, the war would have been renewed with redoubled vigor and it is not known when and how it would have ended. But the Marquess Cornwallis's arrival in India and the declaration of his pacific intentions paved the way towards peace and cessation of hostilities. Lord Lake was opposed to the views of Lord Cornwallis. So the death of Cornwallis was hailed with joy by Lord Lake, not only on public, but private considerations also, since as said before, under Cornwallis the business of Lake as Commander-in-Chief in India was gone. Lake now abandoned his intentions of returning to Europe.

The death of Cornwallis brought Sir George Barlow, the senior member of the Council, to the

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office of Governor-General of India. Sir George Barlow was an apt pupil of the Marquess Wellesley, and was one of those fire-brands who preferred war to peace. On a previous page it has already been mentioned how his views made Lord Wellesley decide to declare hostilities against the Maratha States. The financial situation and pressure from home were the considerations which had made, for a moment at least, the Marquess Wellesley hesitate to declare war with Scindhia and the Raja of Berar ; but the advocacy of Barlow, not for peace but for the shedding of blood, egged on the Governor-General in his scheme of robbery, bloodshed and murder. Sir George Barlow as acting Governor-General could not carry on the policy of Lord Wellesley, because the Government and general public in England had already declared their opposition to it, and also the empty treasury would not permit him to do so. Nevertheless he seems to have adopted a dishonest and dishonorable, mean and contemptible policy towards the native states of India, which will be presently referred to.

The junction of Holkar and Scindhia was not liked at all by the servants of the Company ; they were naturally anxious to divide the interests of these two Maratha chieftains and thus dissolve their union. Lord Cornwallis saw how this could be brought about. His views expressed in his letter

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to Lake under date of 19th Sept., 1805, clearly show how he had proposed to separate Scindhia from Holkar.

In the history of this period written by the English the separation of Holkar from Scindhia does not seem to have been properly explained. But it appears to us that the pacific intentions of Lord Cornwallis had some effect in inducing Scindhia to separate himself from Holkar. The latter had once played the Maratha Confederates false and did not join them, nay even betrayed them, when they were at war with the English. Consequently Scindhia could not trust Holkar, however sincere the latter might have been, at this moment, in his professions.

The arrival of Lord Cornwallis in India must have inspired Scindhia with hope for the reparation, partial at least, of those wrongs and injuries which the Marquess Wellesley had inflicted upon him. It is true that, although requested to do so, Lord Lake did not formally communicate to Scindhia the views of the Governor-General for the settlement of the disputes expressed in his letter of the 19th September, 1805. But there are strong reasons for thinking that in an informal manner these views of Lord Cornwallis had been communicated to Scindhia, who had been led to believe that his separation from Holkar would mend matters and procure for him all those objects for which he was meditating war with the English.

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Our conjecture derives support from the fact that Moonshee Kavel Nyne was chosen by them as the medium for bringing about peace with Scindhia. A few words regarding this Moonshee are necessary to be stated here. He seems to have been a native of Northern India, presumably of Cashmere. He was in the employ of Scindhia, on whose behalf he had signed the Treaty of Peace concluded with the British towards the end of 1803. From the fact that he was very favorably inclined towards the English it is not unreasonable to suppose that he had been bribed by them to betray the interests of his master.

When Holkar, coming out of Bhurtpore, joined Scindhia, and when from this junction there was every likelihood of the outbreak of war between the Marathas and the English, Kavel Nyne left his master and found shelter under the English Government at Delhi. His desertion from Scindhia is thus alluded to by Mr. Mill in his History of India (Vol. vi. p. 457). He writes:—

"Moonshee Kavel Nyne was one of the confidential servants of Scindhia, who had been opposed to Serjee Rao Gautka, *and of course leaned to the British interests.* During the ascendency of Serjee Rao Gautka, Moonshee Kavel Nyne, from real or apprehended dread of violence, had fled from the dominions of Scindhia; and had taken shelter under the British Government at Delhi."

The words put in italics in the above extract

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naturally confirm our suspicion already expressed above that this Moonshee Kavel Nyne was in the pay of the British to betray the interests of his master.

This was the man whom the British had chosen to be their medium to bring about peace between them and Scindhia ; and, it must be admitted that he served them very well indeed. Although Lord Lake had not communicated in a formal manner to Scindhia the proposals which Cornwallis had thought would settle the disputes, yet there are strong grounds to believe that in an informal manner, Scindhia had been acquainted with the pacific intentions of the new Governor-General, and given to understand that all the possessions of which he had been deprived by the Marquess Wellesley would be restored to him provided he would separate himself from Holkar. Scindhia as yet was not fully acquainted with the nature of the servants of the Company with whom he had to deal. And it is probable that he was easily ensnared by their smooth promises. Had not the Marquis Cornwallis met with his death in such an unexpected manner, there is every probability that more generous treatment would have been accorded to Scindhia.

It is also probable that Holkar must have been, in an informal manner, acquainted with the intentions of the Marquis Cornwallis, namely, that all the

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possessions conquered from him, would be restored to him, provided he would cease hostilities. But once bit, twice shy. Holkar knew fully well of the perfidious nature of the servants of the Company. He had no longer any faith in their smooth promises.

That intrigues had been carried on by the English with Moonshee Kavel Nyne to persuade Scindhia to separate himself from Holkar would be evident from what Mill wrote regarding these transactions. He says:—

"Upon the first intimation, from the new Governor-General to the Commander-in-Chief, of the altered tone of politics which was about to be introduced, Moonshee Kavel Nyne was invited to the camp of the Commander-in-Chief; where it was concerted, that one of his relations should speak to Scindhia, and explain to him the facility with which through the medium of Moonshee Kavel Nyne, he might open a negotiation, calculated to save him from the dangers with which he was encompassed." (Vol. vi. p. 457).

These pacific intentions of the Marquis Cornwallis then made Scindhia dissolve the union with Holkar. The latter now had to go and find an asylum somewhere else. Homeless, friendless and penniless, it speaks much to the credit of Jeswunt Rao Holkar that he did not lose presence of mind and surrender himself to the English or sue for peace with them. Early in the month of September, Holkar left Ajmere and directed his steps towards

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the Punjab, giving out his expectation of being joined by the Sikh chiefs and even by the King of Cabul. This expectation on the part of Holkar was quite reasonable when we remember the circumstances of the times. The King of Cabul had threatened the British with an invasion of India. The Panjab was still, if not actually, at least nominally, subject to Cabul. The Sikhs were therefore the subjects of the Cabul sovereign. It was therefore natural for Holkar to expect assistance from the Sikhs. But in this he was disappointed. He was not at that time acquainted with the fact of the intrigues of the English with the Sikh Chieftains of the Punjab, persuading them to throw off their allegiance to the King of Cabul on the one hand, and not to lend a helping hand to the Marathas on the other.

It was after the death of the Marquis Cornwallis that the Treaty of Peace was finally concluded with Scindhia. He had fallen into the trap laid for him by the servants of the Company and having separated from Holkar, it was impossible for him to get out of the trap. Regarding the re-employment of Kavel Nyne by Scindhia, Mr. Mill writes:—

"Scindhia was eager to embrace the expedient, and immediately sent proposals through the medium of Kavel Nyne. By this contrivance the British commander stood upon the vantage ground; and stated, that he could attend to no proposition while the British Residency was detained." (Vol. vi. p. 458).

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There was no other alternative left for Scindhia but to submit to be dictated by the English. Accordingly, he had to dismiss the Residency. Lord Cornwallis having died, Sir George Barlow became the Governor-General of India. He did not offer such liberal terms to Scindhia as his predecessor had intended. The Treaty was concluded and signed on the 23rd November, 1805, under the auspicies of Lord Lake. It was signed on the part of Scindhia, by Moonshee Kavel Nyne and on the part of the English, by Colonel Malcolm. By this Treaty, several items of the previous Treaty, that is, the one concluded through General Wellesley at Surjee Anjengaum, were modified. There was no longer to be any defensive or subsidiary alliance between the English and Scindhia. Gwalior and the province of Gohud were likewise ceded to him.

Lord Lake, during the negotiations preceding the signature of the above Treaty, had left his station in the Upper Provinces and was marching in pursuit of Holkar, whom at last he overtook on the banks of the Beas. Holkar, as said before, did not obtain any help from the Sikhs. Runjeet Singh, who was the principal chief of the Sikhs in the Panjab at this time, did not afford any assistance to Holkar. A story is well known in the Panjab how Holkar beseeched and entreated Runjeet Singh to make common cause with him and fight

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the English. The chief of the Sikhs not only turned a deaf ear to Holkar's appeals and entreaties, but advised him to go and place himself at their mercy for the restoration of his dominion. This Sikh Chief Runjeet Singh was no far-seeing statesman. Had he been so, he would not have intrigued with the English and helped them in dismembering the Maratha Empire. The rise of the Sikh monarchy in the Punjab, was, owing to political expediency, brought about by the English, in whose hands Runjeet Singh was more or less a puppet. Writing to the Secret Committee of the Honorable the Court of Directors, in the Despatch dated 25th September, 1803, the Governor-General in Council said:—

"Raja Runjeet Sing, the Raja of Lahore and the principal amongst the Sikh chieftains has transmitted proposals to the Commander-in-Chief for the transfer of the territory belonging to that nation south of the river Sutledge, on the condition of mutual defence against the respective enemies of that chieftain and of the British nation."

From this, it is quite evident then, that the English were mainly instrumental in the subsequent rise of Runjeet Singh. It was this expectation of aid from them which led Runjeet Singh to stand aloof and not come to the rescue of the Marathas when they had been most unjustly and aggressively attacked by the English. In his 'secret and official'

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letter dated 2nd August, 1803, the Marquess Wellesley wrote to General Lake:—

"Your Excellency has anticipated my opinion with respect to the expediency of endeavouring to obtain the co-operation of the principal chiefs of the tribe of Sikhs, in the approaching contest with the Maratha power.

* * * * *

"I understand, that Rajah Runjeet Sing, the Rajah of Lahore, is considered to be the principal among the chiefs of the tribe of Sikhs, and to possess considerable influence over the whole body of Sikh chiefs.

"In the year 1800 the Resident with Dowlut Rao Scindhia, by my direction, despatched a confidential agent to the principal chiefs, for the purpose of persuading them to unite in opposing the apprehended invasion of Zamaun Shah and of conciliating them to the interests of the British Government.

* * * * *

"Adverting to the great distance of Lahore from the scene of intended operations, the only support to be expected from Raja Runjeet Sing, is the exertion of his influence with the other Sikh chieftains, to induce them to favor the cause of the British Government.

* * * * *

"If it should appear impracticable to obtain the co-operation of those chieftains, it would still be an object of importance to secure their neutrality.

"In your communications to the Sikh Chieftains, it may be proper that your Excellency should suggest to their consideration the danger to which they will hereafter be exposed by any opposition to the interests of the British Government, and the advantages which they may derive from a connection with so powerful a state."

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The growth of the political supremacy of the Sikhs was dependent upon the downfall of the Marathas. The rise of the Sikh monarchy in the Panjab under Ranjeet Singh was due to the break-up of the Maratha Empire, for, in all probability, there would have been no Sikh monarchy, had not the Sikhs remained neutral, or even afforded help to the English in a clandestine manner when the Marathas were in their death struggle with them. Taking all these facts into consideration, it is not to be surprised at, that Holkar met with very scant hospitality at the hands of the future so-called Lion of the Punjab. Chivalry and knightly gallantry enjoining the grant of aid to weak and helpless men never entered largely into the character of the Sikh chiefs of the Punjab in the beginning of the 19th Century. How does the character of the Jat Prince Ranjit Singh of Bhurtpur compare with that of the Sikh Chief Runjit Singh of the Punjab? The one afforded asylum to the destitute Holkar and carried out the laws of Oriental hospitality by making common cause with him and did not shrink from incurring the wrath of the English and exposing his dominions to their unjust and aggressive attack. The other in order to curry favor with them showed very cold shoulders to a refugee whom he should have, had he been true to the traditions of Oriental hospitality, not only afforded protection, but

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tried to meet his wishes by fighting the English as had done his namesake of Bhurtpore.

When Holkar discovered he could not get any assistance from Runjeet Singh and other Sikh Chiefs of the Punjab, he had no other alternative than that of coming to terms with the English. To have gone to Cabul and asked the assitance of its ruler appeared to him to be a wild goose chase. He could not have done so, as the Sikh Chiefs in the Punjab would have certainly intercepted his going.* Mr. Mill (vi. p. 466) writes :—

"Totally disappointed in his hopes of assistance from the Sikh Chiefs, and reduced at last to the extremity of distress, he (Holkar) sent agents, with an application for peace, to the British camp."

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* Besides, it was quite impossible for the king of Cabul to have rendered any assistance in either men or money to Holkar. Afghanistan was at this time the scene of internecine feuds, domestic dissensions, bloodshed, murder and anarchy. All these were brought about through the machinations of the English. The Marquess Wellesley had, in 1799, despatched the well-known Sir John (at that time only Captain) Malcolm to Persia to instigate its ruler to send emissaries to Afghanistan to stir up dissensions, discords and disturbances in that country. The success which attended the exertions of the English exceeded all their expectations. So had Holkar gone to Cabul, he would not only have been disappointed, but in all probability his kingdom would have been annexed by the British.

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Lord Lake was then on the banks of the river Beas and it is probable that he had made Runjeet Singh acquainted with the terms on which peace was to be concluded with Holkar, and asked him to persuade that Maratha Chieftain to send agents to his camp. There is nothing improbable in this supposition, especially when we remember the fact of the intrigues that the British had so secretly carried on with the Sikhs since some years past.*

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* In the autobiography of Ameer Khan (p. 286) is related the manner in which Lord Lake made the world believe that it was Holkar who sued for peace and not the British. There we find it stated :—

"In the meantime General Lake advancing from Karnal came to Puteeala, and thence to the Sutluj, where he encamped under a fort. Leaving his baggage with a rear guard there, he marched again with his army, lightly equipped, to Suwaee Jullundur. The Council at Calcutta had written to urge the General to offer terms, and bring the war to an end as soon as possible. And the General saw himself that, if Runjeet Sing with the Puteeala Chief and other Sirdars of this country, were to make common cause with the Maharaj (Holkar), a new flame would be lighted up, which it would be difficult to extinguish. He accordingly determined to follow his instructions in this respect, and with that view looked out for an intelligent skilful negotiator to be sent to Holkar's camp, and to be made the channel for an overture, in such guise that the Maharaj (Holkar) should be brought to sue for peace, and negotiations commence on that basis," * * * ". Then

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Holkar sent his agents to Lord Lake's camp and on the 24th of December, 1805, a treaty was signed on the terms which the Marquis Cornwallis had proposed. All his territories on the southern side of the rivers Taptee and Godavery, which the English had conquered, were restored to him. There were certain other articles in this Treaty to which we need not refer here.

Thus after all ended the second Maratha war. It showed the English the strong as well as the weak points in the Maratha character. It was the determined policy of the Marquis Wellesley to annihilate the Maratha Chiefs and their military resources, together with their international independence. He was only partially successful. He could not altogether annihilate them. Their military resources were to a great extent crippled, as well as their international independence. The Marquess Wellesley tried to draw within the octopodian arms of his co-religionists and compatriots all the Maratha States by forging on them the fetters of the subsidiary alliance. With the exception of the Peishwa, no other Maratha State was drawn into the abominable scheme of the Subsidiary or so-called defensive

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Amir Khan describes the intrigues of General Lake in making it appear to all that it was Holkar who sued for peace.

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alliance. But all the Maratha princes, the Peishwa, Scindhia, the Raja of Berar and Holkar—were most unjustly deprived of some of their most fertile provinces. That was the sum-total of the Second Maratha War.

Sir George Barlow, who succeeded Lord Cornwallis as Governor-General of India, was, as said before, trained in the school of diplomacy of the Marquess Wellesley. The Marquess Wellesley's policy was to obtain political power in India by reducing the native princes to the position of mere figure heads by imposing on them his scheme of subsidiary alliance. But now, this scheme of Subsidiary Alliance was knocked on the head. The Marquis Cornwallis was opposed to it, for after all, it landed the Company into costly, though not quite unprofitable wars. The low state of the finances of the East India Company would not allow Sir George Barlow to revive it or keep it going. He therefore considered it a matter of great political expediency to obtain power by playing off one chief against the other. The princes of Rajputana had rendered assistance to the British during their war with the Marathas. They had been promised protection by the Marquess Wellesley and his agent Lord Lake. In the defensive alliance with them it was guaranteed to them, that in the event of their being attacked by any one, the British Government of India would come to their

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rescue and afford them help to fight their enemies. But Sir George Barlow withdrew this defensive alliance from them, and tried to play off one against the other. His was the most ultra-Machiavellian policy for the extension and consolidation of the power of his countrymen in India.

Sir George Barlow's policy would never have been known to the outside world but for Sir John Malcolm. "Set a thief to catch a thief," is an old saw. Malcolm's political creed was no better than that of Sir George Barlow, and he would have never exposed him, but for the injuries he had received at his hand while Sir George Barlow was Governor of Madras. In his "Political History of India," Malcolm has very thoroughly exposed the dishonest and contemptible policy of Sir George Barlow. To quote the words of Malcolm, it was

"a policy, which declaredly looks to the disputes and wars of its neighbours, as one of the chief sources of its security; and which, if it does not directly excite such wars, shapes its political relations with inferior states in a manner calculated to create and continue them."

This policy was adopted by Sir George Barlow because the British Government of India were reduced to great pecuniary difficulties and were therefore unable to undertake wars for extension of their political power.

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Regarding this policy of Barlow, Metcalfe wrote:—

"The Governor-General in some of his dispatches, distinctly says that he contemplates in the discord of the native powers, an additional source of strength; and, if I am not mistaken, some of his plans go directly and *are designed* to foment discord among those states.

"But I can contemplate no source of strength in the discords of contiguous powers. It appears to me that in our advanced state of power no great contentions can arise which will not soon reach and entangle us. It is impossible completely to insulate ourselves, and we must be subject to the same chances which work upon states situated as we are." (*The Policy of Sir George Barlow,* from Kaye's Selections from the papers of Lord Metcalfe, p. 7).

Sir George Barlow was not popular with the services. According to Lord Minto, Barlow's merits were the cause of his unpopularity. In a letter to Hon. Gilbert Elliott, dated Calcutta, September 15, 1807, Lord Minto wrote:—

"He (Barlow) is not popular, and I believe his merits may have been the cause of it, or at least one among others. In truth, a Company's servant raised to the commanding height above his fellows which the Governor-General holds here, excites envy rather than respect or love. They are all comparing themselves with him, and their own pretensions with him." (Countess of Minto's *Lord Minto in India.*"

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CHAPTER XLI.

THE MUTINY AT VELLORE.

(10th July, 1806).

The Christian servants of the East India Company, seeing the manner in which the Indian principalities were easily subverted, grew bolder and thought that the non-Christian religions of India also could be easily subverted by them. Marquess Wellesley was the pioneer in this direction. With this object in view he established the College at Fort William, Calcutta.

The Madras Presidency has always been suitable for the thriving of Christianity. The persecuted Nestorian Christians found an asylum there. St. Xavier and those who followed in his wake worked more successfully there than anywhere else in India. It is hence that the "benighted" presidency of Madras shows more native Christians than any other part of India.

Amongst the Christian officers serving out in India, some have always been great zealots in the cause of proselytism and tried to bring the "heathens" from darkness into light. They left no stone unturned to carry their scheme into execution.

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In the beginning of the nineteenth century, the Governor, Lord William Bentinck, and the Commander-in-Chief, Sir John Craddock of the Madras Presidency, with their zeal for so-called reforms, if not for proselytism, tried to ride rough-shod over the religious and social scruples of the Sepoys in that presidency without paying any heed to their feelings and sentiments. The "cunning despotism" which, to quote the words of Herbert Spencer, used "native soldiers to maintain and extend native subjection", was to be used to make India a Christian country. Certain innovations were introduced in the dress and social usages of the Sepoys by order of the Commander-in-Chief with the sanction of the Governor, but without consulting the native officers and men of the Madras Army.

The family members of Tipu Sultan were kept as State prisoners at Vellore, a place well fortified and well garrisoned by British and native troops to keep those state prisoners in awe from committing any mischief to the Company's Government.

It was at Vellore that the sepoys rose in arms and tried to make short work of the Christian officers and men stationed there.

About 2 A.M. of 10th July, 1806, the sepoys assembled at the Main Guard and surrounded the residence of their commanding officer, Colonel Fancourt, who was awakened with a loud firing. When

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coming out of his house to quell the disturbance and when he was exerting himself under a very heavy fire, he was mortally wounded and died that evening at 4. But the mutiny was easily put down and the mutineers punished. As usual, a mixed commission was appointed to inquire into the causes of the Mutiny. The Civil Servants of the Company attributed it to the absurd and foolish military measures; while the military officers regarded it as a conspiracy in favour of the sons of Tipu, who were therefore removed from Vellore to Bengal.

There can be little doubt that the outbreak was due to the novel and absurd military measures introduced in the Sepoy Army. The Sepoy was ordered

"not (to) mark his face to denote his caste, or wear earrings, when dressed in his uniform; and it is further directed that at all parades, and upon all duties, every soldier of the battalion shall be clean shaved on the chin. It is directed also that uniformity shall be preserved in regard to the quantity and shape of the hair upon the upper lip, as far as may be practicable."

Both the Governor and the Commander-in-Chief were justly punished by being recalled from their offices. The Bengal Government were satisfied of the highly good conduct of the sons and other family members of Tipu Sultan and exculpated them from the charge of exciting the mutiny and granted them every indulgence. The news

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of the Mutiny at Vellore, when received in England after several months of its occurrence, produced great panic there. The natives of that country attributed it to the attempts of the authorities at the conversion of India. Revd. Sydney Smith wrote in the *Edinburgh Review* for 1807 on *The Conversion of India,* in which he tried to show how the Civil Servants of the Company were giving encouragement to the missionaries to propagate their faith and proselytise the swarthy heathens. He wrote :—

"In 1804, the *Missionary Society,* a recent institution, sent a new mission to the coast of Coromandel, from whose papers we think it right to lay before our readers the following extracts :—

" 'March 31st, 1805.—Waited on A. B. He says *Government seems to be very willing to forward our views.* We may stay at Madras as long as we please; and when we intend to go into the country, on our application to the Governor by letter, he would issue orders for granting us passports which would supersede the necessity of a public petition :—Lords Day." '.

It should be borne in mind that the Governor referred to above was Lord William Bentinck. Revd. Mr. Sydney Smith wrote further that the missionaries "obtain their passports from Government, and the plan and objects of their mission are printed, free of expense, at the Government press. . . . ." In another Number, the Missionaries write thus to

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the Society of London, about a fortnight before the massacre at Vellore :—

" 'Every encouragement is offered us by the established Government of the country. Hitherto they have granted us every request, whether solicited by ourselves or others. Their permission to come to this place, their allowing us an acknowledgment for preaching in the fort which sanctions us in our work, together with the grant which they have lately given us to hold a large spot of ground every way suited for missionary labours, are objects of the last importance, and remove every impediment which might be apprehended from this source. We trust not to an arm of flesh; but when we reflect on these things, we cannot but behold the loving kindness of the Lord.'

"In a letter of the same date we learn from Brother Ringletanbe the following fact :—

" 'The Dewan of Travancore sent me word that if I despatched one of our Christians to him he would give me leave to build a church at Magilandy. Accordingly, I shall send in a short time. For this important service our Society is indebted alone to Colonel——, without *whose determined and fearless interposition none of their missionaries would have been able to set a foot in that country.'* "

It is not necessary to quote any further from Mr. Smith's article. Bentinck and his compatriots in authority in India were doing everything in their power to encourage the missionaries with the aim of the conversion of the 'heathens'.

The mutiny at Vellore occurred during the Governor-Generalship of Sir George Barlow. Although

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he was expecting to be confirmed in that office, for he had the support of the East India Company, he was greatly disappointed at being superseded by Lord Minto, who was appointed by the Ministry to that post. However, as a solatium, Sir George Barlow was made Governor of Madras in place of Lord William Bentinck, who was recalled.

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